

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Pathfinder Was Born with  
the October Revolution

— PAGES 8-9

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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## Tomato workers win union contract

BETSY McDONALD  
AND LOUIS TURNER

WILLCOX, Arizona—One year after walking off the job at Eurofresh, Inc., tomato workers here on November 9 ratified by an overwhelming majority a three-year contract as members of United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 99. This is the first time Arizona agricultural workers have had a union contract in more than 30 years. The company operates a vast expanse of tomato nurseries.

Workers agreed to hourly raises of 35 cents the first year, 30 cents the second year, and 25 cents the third year.

Currently workers start at \$6.15 an hour. They also won dental coverage and a union health plan that will eliminate worker premiums for dependents' coverage beginning Feb. 1, 2002.

In an interview, Rito Gutiérrez, a leader of the in-plant organizing committee, pointed to two clauses in the contract that workers felt were more important than monetary gains. One states that no worker will be disciplined without cause. The other would allow workers the right to return to

Continued on Page 15

## St. Paul meat packers' union vote is upheld

NLRB certifies workers' decision to join UFCW

BY RAMONA BLACK

ST. PAUL, Minnesota—In a union victory at the Dakota Premium Foods slaughterhouse here, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) has certified the representation election held last July, ruling against the company's charges of unfair practices by the union.

Last July workers at the meatpacking plant voted 112-71 to join United Food and Commercial Workers Local 789 after a seven-week organizing drive that began with a sit-down strike to protest conditions in the plant, especially the increase in line speed.

Rosen's Diversified Inc., which owns Dakota Premium Foods, filed charges with the NLRB to overturn the election. The bosses claimed the union had agents working in the plant who intimidated and pressured workers into voting for the union and promised thousands of dollars and work permits to the mostly immigrant workforce if they backed the union. The company went so far as to assert that union supporters threatened to turn other workers in to the immigration cops if they didn't support the unionization drive.

In her 64-page ruling, Susan

Shaughnessy, hearing officer for NLRB Region 18, rejected the company claims. "I conclude that employer's objections...are without merit, and I recommend, therefore, that they be overruled in their entirety," she

stated.

Workers in the boning and kill departments learned of the ruling at break-time meetings called by company vice presi-

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## 4,000 attend solidarity conference in Havana



Granma/Ahmed Velázquez

Delegates to the world solidarity conference in Havana came from 117 countries

BY BETSEY STONE  
AND LUIS MADRID

HAVANA—The Second World Conference of Friendship and Solidarity with Cuba opened here November 10 with more than

4,000 in attendance from 117 countries. Hundreds of organizations from the Americas, Europe, Africa, and Asia are represented, including solidarity organizations, trade unions, peasant organizations and religious groups that have been working to end the 40-year U.S.-orchestrated policy aimed at overturning the revolution.

The delegates, who crowded into the Karl Marx Theater for the opening session, were welcomed by Sergio Corrieri, president of the Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples. Corrieri recalled how in 1996, when the First World Meeting of Friendship and Solidarity with Cuba took place, the economic crisis precipitated by the abrupt cut-off of trade and aid from the Soviet Union and the Eastern European countries was at its worst. That conference was unforgettable, Corrieri said, because of the support for and confidence in Cuba that was demonstrated at a time of great difficulties, when many people were predicting and preparing for the revolution's demise.

When history is written, he said, "they will point out that these were not the last years of the Cuban revolution, nor the end of history, but the prologue to vast changes that will have to happen in the world if we want it to continue to exist."

He added that this second conference is also timely in its own way since it comes as the Cuban people are intensifying their resistance to U.S. economic and political attacks with marches, rallies, roundtable dis-

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## Behind the factional heat around presidential dispute

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

In the closest U.S. presidential election in decades, Democrats and Republicans were still contending for the White House more than a week after the national vote. As they battle over the decisive electoral votes in Florida, the factional tone among politicians from the two main capitalist parties has sharpened.

Despite talk by commentators of a weakened presidency, however, there is no question that the new administration, whether it

crisis-ridden profit system. The underlying disputes today are over how best to prepare for these inevitable battles down the road, and at what pace.

Washington does not advance its interests at home or abroad based on respect for "clean" elections, "clear mandates," or the moral authority of its leading officials. They have none of those. U.S. imperialism enforces its interests through force, through the use of its military and economic power

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## NEWS ANALYSIS

is headed by Democrat Albert Gore or Republican George W. Bush, will aggressively pursue the bipartisan assault on the social gains and rights of working people at home and seek to advance Washington's imperialist interests abroad.

The political conflicts behind the harsh rhetoric in big-business circles are not about immediate issues but about the future of U.S. capitalism. They are about the coming confrontations with working people that the ruling billionaire families know they must face because they have failed to break the unions, substantially reverse the gains won by Blacks and other oppressed nationalities, reimpose capitalism in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, or force the peoples of the semicolonial countries to accept their status as oppressed nations under the thumb of imperialism.

The "end of history," touted by bourgeois pundits only recently, proved an illusion. The capitalists and their political representatives know they must take on and defeat working people worldwide to salvage their

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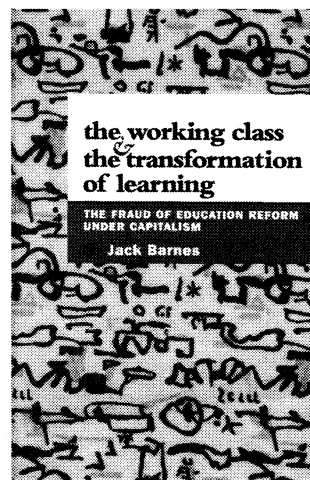
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European currency slides, foreign policy divisions rise — page 11

# Tel Aviv kills Palestinian militia leader, seals off West Bank towns

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

The Israeli government sealed off Palestinian communities in the West Bank on November 14, keeping Palestinians off roads used by 200,000 Israeli settlers in the area. The blockade strengthens measures taken October 9 that prevent Palestinians from traveling to Israel, where more than 120,000 are employed.

These moves came amidst the furor surrounding the assassination of Palestinian militia leader Hussein Obeiyat, ordered by high-level officials in Tel Aviv. Meanwhile, U.S. president William Clinton conducted separate and inconclusive talks with Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak and Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat.

The Israeli army tightened its grip on the occupied territories after Palestinian gunfire hit a car on a West Bank road November 13, leaving two soldiers and two civilians dead. This was the highest one-day toll for Israelis since the conflict broke out at the end of September. The death toll reached at least 226 on November 15, after Israeli soldiers killed six people in the West Bank and two in Gaza. The great majority of the dead are Palestinians killed by Israeli assaults. More than 9,000 have been wounded.

Hussein Obaiyat was killed November 9 by rockets fired from Israeli helicopter gunships that destroyed the car in which he was traveling. Obaiyat is the leader of a Bethlehem militia unit associated with Fatah, the dominant group in the Palestine Liberation Organization. The explosion killed two women who happened to be nearby. "This is our response," said Deputy Israeli Defense Minister Ephraim Sneh after the assassination. "Whoever wants a guerrilla war needs to understand that it's a two-sided thing."

## Clampdown takes a toll

"Israeli generals made clear that more assassinations could follow," reported the *New York Times*. A day later, Israeli soldiers fired on a car driven by Saedi Mohtaseb, another leader of Fatah. Mohtaseb survived, but his son died in the attack. The same day, Israeli police banned Palestinian men under the age of 45 from joining Friday prayers at the al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem, enforcing the edict with batons.

ing the edict with batons.

Tel Aviv's clampdown is taking a heavy toll in the occupied territories. "Israelis are bombarding Palestinian cities for the first time in decades," reported Deborah Sontag in the *New York Times*. Targets have included the Palestinian-owned casino in the West Bank city of Jericho, badly damaged by tank fire on November 12.

In one incident on November 15, Israeli forces, claiming they had come under rifle fire, fired antitank missiles and tank-mounted cannons at a block of flats at a crossroads near Ramallah in the West Bank. Israeli tank machine guns also riddled a Ramallah local government building with bullets.

More than 80 percent of Palestinians suffer serious economic effects from the Israeli military siege, according to a poll reported in the *Ha'aretz* newspaper. "Some 77 percent said the closure stops at least one family member from getting to work," reported the newspaper. The poll results were released November 15, the anniversary of the Palestinian Liberation Organization's 1988 symbolic proclamation of a Palestinian state. More than two-thirds of the 1,234 poll respondents said they support the formation of such a state in the West Bank and Gaza.

## Washington tries to restart talks

At a meeting between Clinton and Arafat on November 8, the U.S. president again rejected Arafat's call for a 2,000-member international "protection force" to be stationed in the Mideast. Arafat has taken the demand to the UN Security Council. Tel Aviv opposes the plan, and has also turned down a proposal by the French government for a smaller, unarmed military observer group.

On his way to Washington to meet Clinton, Barak said he didn't "expect that the talks...will lead to a renewal of negotiations." Washington is pushing for an agreement between Tel Aviv and the Palestinian leadership that would place more responsibility for policing the Palestinian population onto the security forces of the Palestinian National Authority.

The Reuters news service reported on November 15 that a "senior Palestinian se-

curity official said Arafat's security chiefs had issued orders in the past 10 days banning gunmen from firing at Israelis from inside Palestinian-ruled areas of the West Bank and Gaza."

Nevertheless, daily confrontations continue at many different points in the occupied territories, as Palestinians defy the heavy, and growing, presence of the Israeli military. Fatah militia and Palestinian officials, along with Hamas and other organizations, have continued to organize and encourage the actions, which include exchanges of fire with the Israeli forces.

## Washington aid to Israel, Egypt, Jordan

Other developments across the Middle East show Washington's push to increase its already weighty military, economic, and political influence over a number of governments in a region marked by instability.

"With the Middle East peace effort that Mr. Clinton has worked to broker now in shambles," reported the *Times*, "administration officials have sought ways to mitigate the long-term fallout."

Clinton has asked the U.S. congress to grant \$750 million in "emergency aid" to the governments of Israel, Egypt, and Jordan. If the request is granted, Tel Aviv will receive \$450 million in military aid, including a new Arrow II antiballistic missile system. Around \$225 million will go to Cairo "for port and coastal security, which could strengthen Cairo's counterterrorism efforts," reported the November 15 *New York Times*. The Jordanian regime will receive \$25 million to "improve security along its borders with Iraq and Syria and \$50 million to help the Mideast ally's beleaguered economy."

In a letter to congressional leaders, Clinton wrote, "These requests will advance United States interests in the Middle East."

Israel and Egypt are the two largest recipients of U.S. aid, receiving an annual \$2.8 billion and \$2 billion respectively. Washington recently signed a pact with Amman reducing many barriers to trade between the two economies.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak has acted as a willing ally of Washington in recent efforts to bring the situation in Israel and the occupied territories under control. In recent elections, his National Democratic Party won 388 of the Egyptian legislature's 444 seats.

Legal opposition parties took 17 seats, as did candidates backed by the outlawed Muslim Brotherhood. During final runoffs on November 14, police reportedly blocked supporters of opposition candidates from entering several polling stations, firing tear gas and bullets in assaults that took five lives and wounded 40 people. A total of 12 people died in the campaign.

## 'Investigation' in Yemen

Meanwhile, police in Yemen have been publicizing the testimony of a witness who claims to have been part of preparing the alleged attack on the *USS Cole*. The naval



Map of West Bank and Gaza showing areas of limited Palestinian autonomy under 1998 Wye River accords.

destroyer suffered extensive damage, loss of life, and injury in an October 12 explosion in the port of Aden. The man reportedly claims that the "mastermind" for the attack telephoned the bombers from the United Arab Emirates.

The authorities in Aden, who are cooperating with U.S. military and police personnel in a large-scale manhunt, are holding 60 people in jail. U.S. press reports FBI officials have been pressing for wider latitude in the investigation, claiming high-level Yemeni officials are linked to the bombing of the *Cole*. The Yemeni government acceded to the demand this week, allowing U.S. agents "to interview witnesses and to show composite sketches to suspects and eyewitnesses," wrote Associated Press journalist Ahmed Al-Haj.

The journalist reported that 50 Yemeni soldiers had gone to Gol Yamani, the home town of one suspect, "a poor farming town of unpaved dirt lanes and about 500 inhabitants." The soldiers were "armed with semi-automatic rifles and rocket-propelled grenades, and [rode] in a convoy of seven jeeps," he wrote.

## THE MILITANT

### Labor resistance from Brazil to Korea

Unionists in Brazil and south Korea are resisting employer and imperialist demands for cutbacks, layoffs, sell-off of state-run industries, and other measures to squeeze more profits out of workers and farmers. The 'Militant' covers these and other working-class struggles around the world. Don't miss an issue.



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# Daewoo declares bankruptcy, S. Korea workers protest layoffs

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

After failing to get agreement for massive job cuts from union officials, the Daewoo Motor Co. declared bankruptcy November 8. The company, which has the capacity to produce 2.3 million vehicles annually, employs 19,000 workers at five plants in south Korea and has 53,000 employees at 12 overseas plants in India, China, Poland, Uzbekistan, Romania, and Ukraine, as well as a design center in the United Kingdom. It is south Korea's third-largest vehicle manufacturer.

This action came a few days after south Korean banks, in conjunction with the finance ministry, announced drastic measures against 52 companies with total debts of \$7 billion—18 of them are to be liquidated, 20 put up for sale, 11 placed into receivership, and 3 merged with other companies. Up to 200,000 jobs are threatened with elimination, which comes on top of 800,000 already laid off in the past two years.

In response, workers at Daewoo demonstrated November 3 in front of the Korea Development Bank in Seoul, standing up to a police assault. Workers also barricaded production facilities at Samsung's truck plant in Taegu after it was announced that Samsung Commercial Vehicles is one of the companies to be liquidated.

Some 20,000 workers chanting "No Lay-offs!" marched through Seoul, November 12. Some 100 people—50 cops and 50 unionists—were injured when thousands of police using shields formed human barricades across a major street in an attempt to stop the march. The protesters chanted, "Down with [President] Kim Dae-Jung" and called for nationalization of Daewoo Motor.

The head of the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions was enthusiastically greeted by demonstrators when he suggested that a nationwide strike begin in early December.

Construction industry unions have also warned of an indefinite strike starting November 29 if the government goes through with its plans to shut down 11 construction firms.

A November 9 editorial in *The Korea Herald* entitled "A bleak winter ahead" observed, "Hundreds of thousands of workers will lose their jobs sooner or later in the wake of last week's announcement by creditor banks of a list of insolvent companies. They will join the huge crowds of jobless who have already endured enormous difficulties since the financial crisis of three years ago. This time around, the pain will be felt even sharper."

The scope of the crisis of which working people are being forced to bear the brunt is reflected in the steep decline in the value of company stocks. Measured in dollars, the stock market in south Korea, as well as those in Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand, have fallen by 50 percent so far this year.

In August 1999 Daewoo was "bailed out" by the banks, which instituted a debt rescheduling program aimed at selling off the firm or its assets.

Daewoo's latest proposed concessionary package, announced last month, included cutting its workforce by about 20 percent. In fact, the banks refused to loan any more money to Daewoo without agreement from

the workers to accept massive job cuts. Union officials responded that management must first pay wage arrears of \$100 million owed to the workers before they would contemplate any further job cuts or a wage freeze.

The court has until mid-December to decide whether to grant bankruptcy protection for Daewoo or order its liquidation. According to an article in the November 10 *Financial Times*, the court's decision "will depend on the company's restructuring programme, including forcing workers to accept a reduction in the 19,000-strong workforce by 3,500."

Daewoo Motor suspended production at its largest assembly plant in south Korea November 9. The closure of this Pupyong plant will affect some 185 subcontractors, which employ more than 100,000 workers.

The company has also proposed a 30 percent cut of the 4,000 jobs at the company's van manufacturing plant in Lublin, Poland. The Polish government has offered \$180 million in loan guarantees to sustain production at Daewoo's two main plants in the



Auto workers at Daewoo stave off cop attack during November 3 protest in Seoul

country. It has also threatened to take over control of Daewoo's passenger car plant in Warsaw, Daewoo-FSO, if operations shut down. Some 5,500 workers are employed at this plant, in which Daewoo has an 86.6 percent stake. Seoul has announced plans to eliminate 2,600 of these jobs.

The *Financial Times* editors called the bankruptcy declaration by Daewoo "a wel-

come sign," stating that "the most critical issue is the government's determination to stand firm in the face of political unpopularity, as essential restructuring leads to factory closures and job losses." The big-business daily added, "Decisive action to bury these industrial dinosaurs will increase foreign investors' confidence and inward investment."

## Quebec truck strikers resist gov't attack

BY AL CAPPE

MONTREAL—"They have seized my truck. I have been fined \$300. My employer is suing me for \$860,000. But I am not going back to work," stated Eric Huard in an interview.

Huard is an independent trucker and a rank-and-file organizer in the unionization drive among 900 truckers who haul containers to and from the Port of Montreal.

The truckers, members of the Syndicat National du Transport Routier (SNTR, National Union of Truckers) affiliated to the Confederation of National Trade Unions (CNTU), went on strike against 41 companies October 22 after two years of unsuccessful efforts to win union recognition and a first contract. The union members include drivers of company equipment paid hourly, independent owner-operators, and truckers working for temporary labor agencies.

At the heart of struggle are the owner-operators who, like truckers across North America, often work long hours and still barely survive on what's left after the expenses of truck payments, repairs, fuel, insurance, and other fees deducted from their earnings, which are paid per run or per mile.

After the first five days of the strike there was a backlog of 15,000 containers piled up in the port of Montreal. Some local factories were idled.

On November 2, the Quebec National Assembly unanimously adopted strikebreaking legislation introduced by the Parti Québécois government of Prime Minister Lucien Bouchard. Law 157 orders the truckers to return to work or face stiff penalties.

The truckers refused to submit and stayed on the picket lines, reaching out for solidarity from other unionists and organizing public protests.

On November 8, Bouchard told the National Assembly, "The government will enforce this law like all others, totally and without exception."

The CNTU has been fined \$125,000 a day since November 3. Trucking companies have filed lawsuits against the union totaling \$16 million.

Between November 7 and 8, some 150 truckers received visits from cops or bailiffs delivering notices of fines up to \$1,000. Companies have been firing striking drivers and repossessing trucks that were financed through the employer.

The November 12 edition of *Le Journal de Montréal* reported that three truckers have been arrested on various charges, including damaging vehicles, uttering threats, and possession of a "dangerous" weapon, referring to a slingshot.

On November 8, the federal government of Prime Minister Jean Chrétien delivered the truckers a carefully timed blow designed to undermine the union fight. The Canadian Industrial Relations Board rejected 33 of the 41 union accreditation demands, ruling that

owner-operators were not employees and that the union had failed to sign up a majority of employees.

But independent operators point out that they are not self-employed. They are hired by the trucking companies, which determine the pay rate per load and what loads the trucker moves and when. The independents are workers who are required to furnish their own rigs, in some cases financed by the company and painted in company colors. They are fighting for an hourly wage and protection from fuel price hikes and unfair insurance and licensing costs.

Undeterred by the antiunion attack, 500 truckers assembled on November 8 and reaffirmed their decision to stay out until they had a negotiated agreement.

Despite an injunction limiting their effectiveness, picket lines have gone up every

morning at the port and a picket shack is being constructed.

Bouchard crows that his legislation is working and that container traffic is back to 75 percent of normal levels. Although some truckers have returned to work, the CNTU states that the level of port activity is closer to 30 percent. The general manager of Garfield Container Transport told the *Montreal Gazette* November 8, "There are no drivers. We have no business." The paper also reported that container traffic at the Canadian Pacific rail yard had a two-week backlog, with 20 shipping firms unable to send trucks.

Some 600 truckers and their supporters protested November 10 outside Bouchard's offices in downtown Montreal.

*Al Cappe is a meat packer in Montreal.*

## Striking nickel miners in Ontario face use of scabs

BY TONY DI FELICE  
AND ANOUK KENDERGIAN

SUDBURY, Ontario—At an overflow union membership meeting on November 9 here, the 1,250 striking nickel miners at Falconbridge Ltd. agreed to allow the bargaining committee to request binding arbitration in order to reach an agreement. The members of Mine Mill/Canadian Auto Workers Local 598 have been on strike since August 1 against company demands for sweeping contract concessions from the union that would essentially gut seniority, health and safety, and union representation on the job, as well as increase the use of nonunion labor.

Meanwhile, Local 40 of the Norwegian Chemical Workers Union (NKIF) voted by a 90 percent margin to declare a five-day sympathy strike in solidarity with CAW Local 598 starting November 15. More than 500 union members work at the Falconbridge refinery in Norway, one of the world's largest.

Falconbridge hired additional security from a special agency based in Toronto to escort the trucks delivering ore to the smelter for the round trips and to escort the buses carrying in the scabs. Workers pointed to the cameras attached to the Accu-fax trailers near the picket lines.

The use of scabs and management personnel to maintain production is relatively new. Workers on the picket line underlined the anti-labor attitude of the provincial government headed by Premier Michael Harris. "Basically, we're not just fighting the company, we're fighting Mike Harris and his laws," stated Mike Chertow. "Harris is giving them the legal right to do things like this but they'll never

have the moral right to put guys on the street like this," added Dave Hebert.

The company claims the smelter is running at 60 percent capacity. Most workers interviewed believed it was more like 30 percent.

Commenting on the company's hard-line stance, Hebert stated, "Actually it's backfiring; it's creating solidarity. Each guy's getting to know about what's going on in the other place. They thought it would divide us but it's bringing us together."

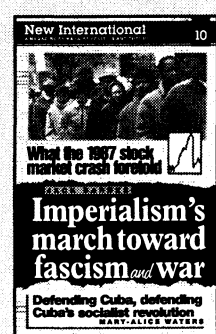
Rolly Gauthier, president of Mine Mill/Canadian Auto Workers Local 598, said the union is prepared to accept binding arbitration "if all else fails" to resume talks and a negotiated settlement.

The union membership meeting voted to "authorize the bargaining committee to move halfway to the company's position on the question of union time, as a gesture of good faith." One of the concessions demanded by the company is to cut union representation on the job.

Workers described the solidarity they have received. Besides support from workers in Norway, unionized workers at a Falconbridge plant in Timmins, Ontario, contributed \$5,000. United Steelworkers of America Local 6500, which represents 3,000 nickel miners at Inco here, is donating \$1,000 a month for the duration of the strike, and Steelworkers have joined the picket line.

The Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union stocks a special store for the miners on strike. "The stakes are much higher than just us. We're fighting for the teachers, Inco workers, the community," said Darin Nicksy.

### In New International no. 10



- Imperialism's March toward Fascism and War Jack Barnes
- What the 1987 Stock Market Crash Foretold
- Defending Cuba, Defending Cuba's Socialist Revolution Mary-Alice Waters

Available from bookstores listed on page 12

# 'Militant'/'PM' Fund is over goal at \$113,000

BY DON MACKLE

Congratulations to all supporters of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*! We did it! More than \$113,000 was received for the \$110,000 fund by November 13, going over the goal.

Many areas reported that central to the success of the drive was the political interest in coverage of developments in Yugoslavia and the Middle East, and strikes and struggles in the United States and elsewhere. How the struggle of working people in the United States is part of the resistance of workers and farmers worldwide—such as the downfall of the Slobodan Milosevic regime in Yugoslavia and the continued resistance by Palestinian people to the Israeli occupation of their land—has been the central theme of fund drive meetings over the past weeks.

These events highlighted the invaluable role of working-class publications that honestly and accurately report on struggles taking place today. As well, we received a tremendous response to the special appeal for donations to the fund to help pay for the international reporting team that went to Yugoslavia. A total of \$113,628 has been contributed to the fund.

BY BILL KALMAN

SAN FRANCISCO—Close to 50 people turned out here at a November 11 meeting to hear Argiris Malapanis, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party, discuss the unfolding class struggle in Yugoslavia and the Balkans. The meeting was a big boost to the fund-raising efforts of local supporters of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*, who

through the event reached a total of \$10,850 raised for the socialist publications since the international fund campaign began September 4. Fund organizers here have twice raised their local quota, from \$10,000 to \$11,000, then to \$12,500.

Malapanis headed a team of worker-correspondents for the *Militant* who traveled to Yugoslavia to meet workers, students, and others who helped lead the revolt that brought down the regime of Slobodan Milosevic.

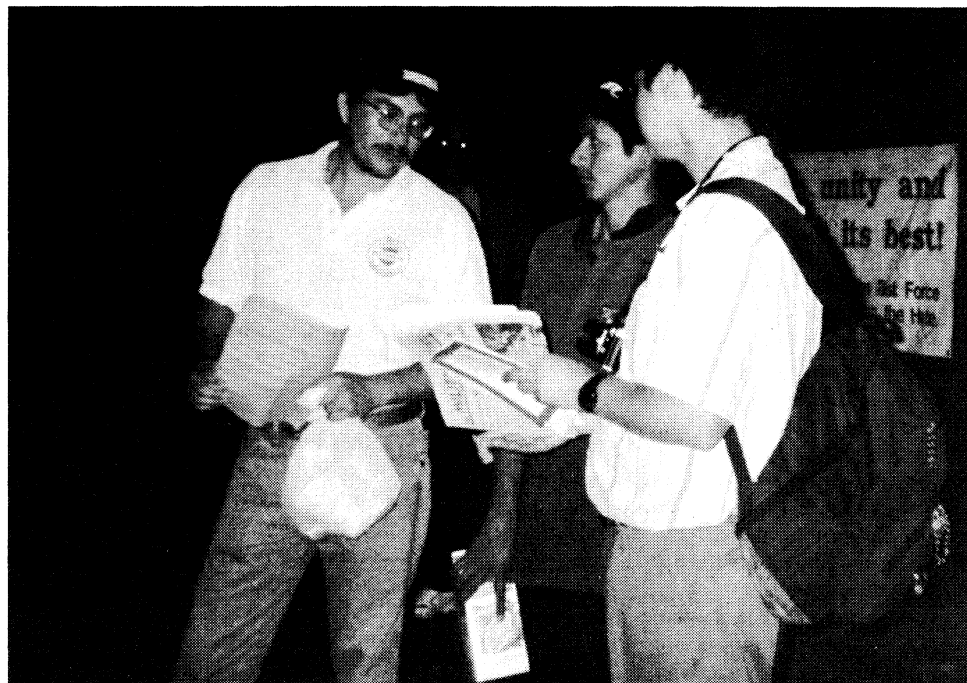
## Workers seek to expand political space

"Six weeks ago a political strike and popular revolt toppled the bureaucratic Milosevic regime, with workers playing the decisive role. This is something to celebrate," Malapanis said. He described how working people are now seeking to protect and extend their newly won political space, while the new petty-bourgeois regime tries to demobilize them as it orients toward trying to integrate Yugoslavia further into the world capitalist market.

Malapanis explained that U.S. imperialism is the main enemy of Yugoslav working people, as demonstrated by the savage U.S.-led bombing campaign against Yugoslavia in 1999.

U.S. military intervention in the Balkans—including the ongoing presence of U.S. occupation troops—is aimed at reinforcing Washington's predominance in the region over its European rivals, and to strengthen the eastward expansion of NATO toward the Russian workers state.

The U.S. rulers' anti-working-class foreign policy, from Yugoslavia to the Mideast to Cuba, is "an extension of their assault on working people in this country," Malapanis noted. "Regardless of who the next U.S. president is, the new administration's starting point will be what the Clinton-Gore administration and Congress have carried out, which was a bipartisan shift to the right in bourgeois politics." The target of this bipartisan offensive is workers' hard-won social conquests together with efforts to further narrow democratic rights.



Militant  
At rally for immigrant rights in Happaage, New York, October 15, participants check out the socialist publications. Fund for *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* makes possible on-the-scene reporting trips like one that recently went to Yugoslavia.

"Our team met a number of individual workers and students who are open to a genuinely communist, revolutionary working-class perspective," one they were exposed to for the first time in meeting communist workers from capitalist countries, Malapanis explained. There are fewer barriers than ever to militant workers and revolutionists linking up with each other around the world, he pointed out.

The *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* play an irreplaceable role in this process, Malapanis emphasized. Those present responded enthusiastically to the fund appeal for the socialist periodicals. They contributed a total of \$1,520 at the meeting.

BY RAMONA BLACK

ST. PAUL, Minnesota—More than \$1,400

dollars was raised at a meeting for the *Militant/Perspectiva Mundial* Fund here. The public event brought together meat packers, other industrial workers, college students, and others to discuss politics in the world today and the importance of these two socialist publications for workers and farmers.

One of the speakers at the meeting, Hilario Pérez, 24, a worker at a local pallet factory, spoke about why he relies on reading the Spanish-language socialist magazine *Perspectiva Mundial* every month. "I think that as workers we must invite other workers to read this magazine," Pérez said. He added that *Perspectiva Mundial*, like the *Militant*, is financed by contributions from workers. "Workers need to contribute to make it possible to produce this magazine." He added that some day "it may even be possible for the magazine to come out every week!"

Pérez suggested that those in the audience who were not fluent in Spanish should consider subscribing to *Perspectiva Mundial* to help them improve their Spanish, and explained that he plans to subscribe to the *Militant* to improve his English.

The main speaker at the event, Karen Ray, focused on two key developments in the class struggle today—the role of working people in toppling the Milosevic regime in Yugoslavia and the political space that they are seeking to use today, and the fight for a democratic, secular Palestine.

One person attending the meeting, a meat packer at Dakota Premium Foods, asked about the difference between the popular Mexican newsweekly *Proceso* and *Perspectiva Mundial*. Pérez replied that *Proceso*'s reporters "go to the politicians to hear what their opinions are" instead of telling the truth about the struggles of working people. "It is not a voice for working people," he concluded.

## Contribute to Militant and Perspectiva Mundial Fund

	Goal	Paid	%
<b>Australia*</b>	1,150	1,248	109%
<b>Canada</b>			
Toronto	2,840	2,955	104%
Vancouver*	1,300	1,304	100%
Montreal	1,340	1,107	83%
<b>Canada Total</b>	5,000	5,366	107%
<b>Sweden*</b>	580	600	103%
<b>United States</b>			
Twin Cities	3,500	4,971	142%
Pittsburgh	4,000	4,567	114%
Boston	4,000	4,421	111%
Newark	3,000	3,308	110%
Atlanta	4,600	4,961	108%
Seattle	9,000	9,720	108%
Chippewa Falls*	740	785	106%
St. Louis*	2,000	2,116	106%
Houston	6,500	6,800	105%
NY Garment Dist.*	5,600	5,839	104%
Des Moines	1,800	1,876	104%
Miami	2,300	2,380	103%
Upper Manhattan	3,000	3,085	103%
Chicago	7,500	7,631	102%
San Francisco*	12,500	12,610	101%
Detroit	3,750	3,775	101%
Charlotte	2,800	2,804	100%
Fresno	200	200	100%
Tampa*	900	900	100%
Brooklyn	3,200	3,106	97%
Los Angeles*	8,000	7,642	96%
Cleveland	1,600	1,477	92%
Washington	3,000	2,764	92%
Grand Junction	1,400	1,219	87%
Philadelphia*	3,000	2,511	84%
Allentown	1,200	910	76%
Birmingham	3,200	2,411	75%
Other		445	
<b>U.S. Total</b>	102,290	105,234	103%
<b>Iceland</b>	250	250	100%
<b>New Zealand</b>			
Auckland	1,170	1,114	95%
Christchurch	520	450	87%
<b>NZ Total</b>	1,690	1,564	93%
<b>United Kingdom</b>	870	30	3%
<b>France</b>		320	
<b>Belgium</b>		580	
<b>Int'l Total</b>	111,830	113,628	102%
<b>Goal/Should be</b>	110,000	110,000	100%
*raised goal			

## Pathfinder volunteers make special push on Spanish titles

BY TOM TOMASKO

SAN FRANCISCO—The volunteers of the Pathfinder Reprint Project completed six Pathfinder titles in October and sent them to the publishing house ready to reprint.

The volunteers are making a special push to get five titles in Spanish out so they will be ready for international book fairs in Guadalajara, Mexico, at the end of November and in Havana early next year. Pathfinder will have booths at both events, which attract thousands of working people and students. Two of the titles completed in October are in Spanish. *Nueva Internacional no. 2* was finished in September; *Wall Street enjuicia al socialismo* (Socialism on Trial), by James P. Cannon in November. In a few days a new pamphlet, *Pathfinder nació con la revolución de octubre* (Pathfinder was Born with the October Revolution), will also be ready for the presses.

The six titles made ready in October were *Che Guevara: Economics and Politics in the Transition to Socialism*, *Nueva Internacional no. 3*, *Segunda declaración de La Habana*, *To See the Dawn*, *Fidel Castro's Political Strategy*, and *Introduction to the Logic of Marxism*. The one book completed so far in November brings to 20 the number of titles turned out by the volunteers since July, towards a goal of 30 by Jan. 1, 2001, the 42nd anniversary of the Cuban revolution.

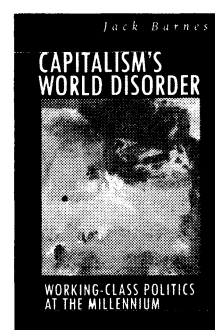
About two and a half years ago, the Pathfinder reprint project volunteers set out to transform all of Pathfinder's titles to digital form. Since then, 108 titles have been completed, which, together with a few titles already in digital form, represents almost 40 percent of all Pathfinder titles. In the past month the Reprint Project steering committee, which organizes the work of about 150 volunteers in many countries, accepted a series of proposals by the Pathfinder editorial staff made possible by the increased competence and self-confidence of the volunteers.

While continuing to digitize the 214 remaining titles, volunteers will also take re-

sponsibility for formatting the text of new titles being produced by the publishing house. They will also relieve the Pathfinder staff of many of the quality checks they had been performing on book format and graphics, allowing the staff to concentrate on editorial work and book promotion.

The first new pamphlet is *Pathfinder nació con la revolución de octubre*. This is a speech by Mary-Alice Waters, the president of Pathfinder Press, that explains the revolutionary publishing house is part and parcel of the historical struggle of the workers and farmers worldwide to defend their rights, to take political power from the capitalists and landlords, and begin the construction of socialism (see excerpt, pages 8-9).

## FROM PATHFINDER



### Capitalism's World Disorder

*Working-Class Politics at the Millennium*

Jack Barnes

The social devastation, financial panics, political turmoil, police brutality, and military assaults accelerating all

around us are the inevitable forces unleashed by capitalism. But the future capitalism has in store for us can be

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working people, as political resistance grows, will revolutionize themselves, their unions and other organizations, and all of society. Also available in Spanish and French. \$19.95

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Tel: (212) 741-0690. Please include \$3 for shipping and handling.



Use 'Militant' to help explain politics of so-called election crisis

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

The Militant's explanation of the politics behind what is touted as an "election crisis" and the capitalist rulers' preparation for coming class battles will be welcomed by unionists involved in labor actions, farmers defending their livelihoods, and students on campuses across the country.

We encourage every reader of the Militant to join in the last week of the circulation drive, which ends November 21. The Militant will be accepting subscriptions until the end of the day to count toward local goals adopted by supporters of the paper around the world. Using every day between now and then will make a difference in meeting the international goals.

The Militant has been explaining that regardless of the election's outcome, big-business politicians Albert Gore and George Bush plan to advance the interests of the bourgeois class and will take as their starting point how to deepen the bipartisan assault on the social wage and democratic rights of workers and farmers, as pointed out in The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning by Jack Barnes. The pamphlet notes how Bush and Gore are champions of the death penalty and other weapons of class terror, including cops on the street, and prison guards, who have killed thousands of working people over the past decade.

The U.S. rulers are laying the groundwork for sharper confrontations with the working class and its allies among exploited farmers and others. But they face a growing problem with the increasing resistance among the toilers that is bringing together a vanguard of workers across the country who are receptive to revolutionary ideas, are beginning to read more widely, and broaden their scope. Pathfinder's newest pamphlet is aimed at these militants and the youth who are attracted to their proletarian course.

Partisans of the socialist press have stepped up sales of this new title in several areas. "We had a good day of sales last Sunday, selling 11 pamphlets, four of them with subscriptions to Perspectiva Mundial at a new location we tried out for the first time," wrote Seth Galinsky. He said they also sold a Militant subscription in the area, where they are deepening their political roots in the workers district where the Upper Manhattan Pathfinder Bookstore is located.

"A young construction worker from the Dominican Republic who lives in the Bronx bought the special deal offered by Pathfinder of \$1 for the pamphlet with a PM subscription. He asked us if we organized any classes on the books we sell that he could attend," Galinsky added.

In New York's Garment District socialist workers and members of the Young Socialists set up three literature tables. They sold three PM subscriptions, one subscription to the Militant, and several Pathfinder titles. "Later that afternoon we held a class on The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning," said Patrick O'Neill. "Two workers we met at the tables came to our meeting hall. One was carrying a pamphlet he purchased off a table we had set up some time earlier. They joined us in a lively, serious class, which also included two workers from Long Island who are involved in an ongoing fight to defend immigrant workers' right to work in the face of right-wing violence."

involved in an ongoing fight to defend immigrant workers' right to work in the face of right-wing violence."

Sales teams to coal mining towns

The Militant receives a good hearing in the coalfields and coal mining towns. This is where a social movement exists to defend federally guaranteed health-care benefits won through decades of union battles, as well as where workers face devastation of whole areas by the coal companies and attacks by the bosses on the United Mine Workers of America. "We sold a pamphlet with a subscription to the Militant in Gillespie, a mining town in central Illinois where we have sent a sales team for the past two weeks," wrote Marty Ressler. "One miner told us when he bought the Militant, 'I really enjoy reading this paper.'"

In Birmingham, Alabama, Susan LaMont, a garment worker, wrote, "Earlier this week, a leader of the Alabama Black Lung Association bought a subscription to the Militant after explaining to members at their November meeting what a useful paper it was in terms of coverage of the black lung fight and other issues affecting miners directly."

She said Militant campaigners in Alabama received a boost after sending a team door-to-door in Sumiton, a small community northwest of Birmingham where coal miners live and shop. "Five people bought copies of the Militant and we plan to follow up on those who told us to call them back this week."

LaMont said another team went to Hueytown, a small town west of Birmingham where coal miners, steelworkers, and other industrial workers live. "After selling two copies of the paper, that team then went to sell at Drummond's big Shoal Creek mine on the Black Warrior River. Although it was Veteran's Day and there was only a small crew working, one of the few miners who came out pulled over and stopped to talk to those on the sales team. After looking at the Militant article on the recent Black Lung Association meeting in Beckley, West Virginia, he decided to subscribe on the spot. He told them about his local union's participation in the May 17 miners' demonstration of 8,000 people in Washington, as well as activities around Camp Solidarity during the hard-fought miners' strike against Pittston Coal Co. more than a decade ago."

"Next weekend we will be traveling to Natchez, Mississippi, to visit with strikers at Titan Tire and will have a class on the pamphlet with two strikers we know."

Socialists in Des Moines are driving to make all their local quotas and "plan to go over as much as we can to help the international campaign make all the goals," said Joe Swanson. "This week we sold subscriptions in Omaha, Nebraska, a plant gate in Marshalltown, Iowa, at a meatpacking plant in Perry, Iowa, and in Des Moines."

He said they have planned a number of political activities to recruit workers and expand the readership of the paper. Edwin Fruit, a socialist who works at a meatpacking plant in Perry, reported that one of his co-workers wants to attend a class on the Pathfinder book The Changing Face of U.S. Politics."



Demonstrator checks out revolutionary literature at protest in Washington in support of Palestinians' right to return to their homeland.

Where we stand at week 9

Mil	PM	Pamphlet
Week 10		
Week 9		
Week 8		
Week 7		
Week 6		
Week 5		
Week 4		
Week 3		
Week 2		
Week 1		

MUA—Maritime Union of Australia  
NDU—National Distribution Union  
UFCW—United Food and Commercial Workers  
UMWA—United Mine Workers of America  
UNITE—Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees

Subscription campaign to win new readers: September 9–November 12

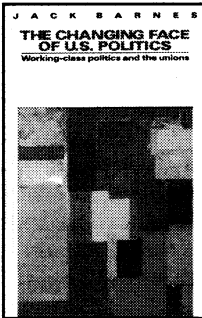
Country	Militant			PM		Pamphlet	
	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold
Sweden	12	14	117%	5	7	15	14
Australia	15	14	93%	3	2	25	22
New Zealand							
Christchurch	8	6	75%	1		10	5
Auckland	15	11	73%	1		20	17
N.Z. total	23	17	74%	2		30	22
United States							
Los Angeles	40	42	105%	20	23	80	75
Tucson	5	5	100%	3	3	8	8
Atlanta*	25	24	96%	12	13	40	39
Allentown	18	17	94%	3	1	35	25
Miami	30	28	93%	15	12	60	52
San Francisco	35	32	91%	20	13	80	50
Des Moines	35	31	89%	20	17	50	46
Cleveland	30	26	87%	6	2	50	42
Washington	30	25	83%	10	9	80	80
N.Y. Garment Dist.	65	54	83%	35	33	150	157
Boston	25	20	80%	8	1	65	47
Houston	50	37	74%	20	11	75	60
Chippewa Falls	15	11	73%	10	11	20	15
Pittsburgh	35	25	71%	2		50	38
Seattle	30	19	63%	10	10	75	61
St. Louis	25	15	60%	9	4	45	27
Upper Manhattan	67	40	60%	25	39	140	125
Chicago	45	25	56%	15	16	85	67
Detroit	20	11	55%	5	2	35	33
Twin Cities	55	30	55%	25	28	110	25
Newark*	55	29	53%	30	24	110	96
Philadelphia	25	13	52%	5	3	50	17
Charlotte	15	7	47%	5		50	28
Brooklyn	60	26	43%	30	34	120	76
Birmingham	35	15	43%	2	1	50	25
Fresno	10	4	40%	6	6	30	13
Tampa	10	4	40%	5		15	7
Grand Junction	20	6	30%	1		20	13
Other		4			1		
U.S. total	910	625	69%	357	316	1778	1347
Canada							
Vancouver	30	22	73%	5	1	40	32
Montreal	15	10	67%	5	4	35	36
Toronto	25	11	44%	6	2	35	36
Canada total	70	43	61%	16		110	104
United Kingdom	30	18	60%	10	10	60	36
Iceland	8	3	38%	1		12	8
Int'l totals	1068	734	73%	394	335	2030	1553
Goal/Should be	1000	900	90%	350	315	2000	1800
In the unions							
New Zealand							
NDU	1	1	100%				
Australia							
MUA	2	1	50%		1	3	2
United States							
UMWA	18	13	72%			18	16
UNITE	30	13	43%	20	6	60	55
UFCW	35	10	29%	35	9	50	28
U.S. total	83	36	43%	55	15	128	99
Canada							
UFCW	12	1	8%	2	0	15	4
raised goal*							

From Pathfinder

The Changing Face of U.S. Politics

Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions  
Jack Barnes

A handbook for workers coming into the factories, mines, and mills, as they react to the uncertain life, turmoil, and brutality of capitalism in the closing years of the twentieth century. It shows how millions of workers, as political resistance grows, will revolutionize themselves, their unions, and all of society. Also available in Spanish and French. \$19.95



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# Civil trial hears how cops in New Jersey brutalized Earl Faison

BY MARK BARTON

NEWARK, New Jersey—Five Orange, New Jersey, cops beat Earl Faison after he was handcuffed, and then pepper-sprayed him from a canister held directly against his nose and mouth. So testified a five-year veteran of the police force before a federal jury here November 13.

Faison, a 27-year-old Black man who suffered from asthma, died within an hour of being taken into custody on April 11, 1999. He was one of several "suspects" rounded up and "interrogated" in a series of savage police operations carried out in the days following the April 8, 1999, killing of an Orange cop allegedly investigating a robbery.

Detective Keith Jackson described in detail, for the first time in open court, what happened prior to Faison's death.

Two Orange cops threw Faison into the back of a squad car "like a rag doll," Jackson said, and beat him with their fists as he lay handcuffed and in the back seat. Next, they took him to a secluded stairwell in the station and robbed him. Then one officer, "with a smirk on his face" according to Jackson, sprayed Faison at point-blank range with a pepper gas canister.

Faison was pronounced dead by the time he arrived at a local hospital.

"From the moment I saw the pictures" at the morgue, Earl Williams, Faison's father, told the *Militant* at the time, "I knew he had been beaten to death." His son's face was full of cuts and bruises, he said, and was so swollen that it looked as if "he was dragged by a truck."

Despite widespread and continuing pro-

tests, no criminal charges have ever been brought against the five cops—four white, one Black—who beat and sprayed Faison. They are being tried now solely on federal charges of violating his civil rights.

This is truly an outrage, said Williams, at a break in testimony. "Everybody knows that what they did was a criminal act, and they just lied about it."

Andrea Puryear, a student at Essex Community College attending the trial, agreed. "Those cops should be on trial for murder," she said, just like the ones who killed her 20-year-old nephew, Sharif Alston, in East Orange in 1996. The cops claimed he was



Militant/Megan Arney

Supporters of justice for Earl Faison march May 1, 1999, in Orange, New Jersey.

attacking them in a stolen car, she said, but he was "shot in the back." No one was ever charged in the case.

Meanwhile, just hours prior to the trial testimony in the Faison case, 31-year-old

Mitchel Spero died en route to a Newark hospital after being pepper-sprayed by cops in nearby Monroe Township. Spero, cops claimed, had been causing a "disturbance" outside a volunteer fire station.

## Actors celebrate gains made in strike

BY CLAUDIA HOMMEL

CHICAGO—Some 200 members of the Screen Actors Guild (SAG) and the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (AFTRA) here celebrated on November 13 the settlement of their six-month-long national strike. Blue balloons that had marked every picket line now graced the entrance to the Film and Tape Works studios. Supporters of the strike joined the celebration, including several members of Teamsters Local 705, AT&T workers in the Communication Workers of America, spouses, and nonunion actors who had put in time on the picket line.

While music, dancing, and food took center stage, Eileen Willenborg, executive director of the joint Chicago offices of SAG and AFTRA, spoke briefly to the hard work

and tenacity of the rank-and-file members who kept the strike strong. "This is an absolute victory," she said, referring to the provisions of the new contract now being voted on by mail across the country.

The joint boards of SAG and AFTRA have voted overwhelmingly to recommend ratification to the union membership. Key improvements in the television commercials contract include recognition of SAG and AFTRA's jurisdiction of commercials recorded for the Internet, preservation of pay-per-play residual structure on network broadcasts, improved payment by 20 percent of Spanish-language programs use, and other improvements for the health and retirement funds and background actors ("extras"). The radio contract proposal has similar improvements. The advertisers had

hoped to keep the union out of the Internet territory and push the union back on the longstanding pay-per-play method of compensation.

The unionists' daily actions since May 1 were instrumental in forcing concessions from the advertising giants. In the course of the strike, Willenborg remarked, "we learned we're a union. Not a guild, not a federation, but a real union."

In thanking the other unions, she referred to the many actions where SAG and AFTRA members were able to shut down construction and production at the buildings and factories belonging to major advertisers, like Ford and AT&T, who were shooting scab commercials during the strike. "The Teamsters taught us how to hold a picket line, how to turn around the Teamster trucks from the gates."

Dale Inghram, an active member of the Strike Force committee, described a 30-hour action at the Ford Torrence plant on Chicago's South Side in mid-October. It took only 10-15 members at a time to cause Ford managers to shut down the plant for lack of parts when Teamsters refused to cross the picket line. More than 2,000 members of the United Auto Workers were sent home that day. "I had so much fun I stayed for 15 hours. Everyone was so serious, but when the TV cameras were on me I just said, 'They're leaving! They're leaving!'" Inghram said. "We learned a lot from other unions, and I think they learned a lot from us too."

Claudia Hommel is a member of Screen Actors Guild and the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists.

## Greens push German gov't attack on pensions

BY GREG McCARTAN

The German government took another step in its attack on federal pensions in mid-November after the Green Party went on an offensive to press Chancellor Gerhard Schröder of the Social Democratic Party to move ahead with its assault.

Retirement pensions are currently 70 percent of wages, and the government has declared its intention to lower them considerably. In the first major change in the pension system since the 1950s, the government is seeking to substitute private retirement accounts for a portion of the pension by offering tax incentives. The government says it seeks to have younger generations invest up to 4 percent of their gross income in private pension plans.

The assault on pensions comes in the wake of a major tax cut bill, hailed by German capitalists, that will give them an estimated \$30 billion in tax breaks and will eliminate capital gains tax on sales of big corporate cross shareholding.

Schröder announced a one-year delay in the introduction of the private pension plan, partially due to opposition to the move from trade unions. The Greens, a junior coalition partner with the Social Democrats, complained there "has been a lack of leadership" on the pension issue. "Schröder hasn't been willing to take the reins," said one official. The Green Party has made overhauling the

pension system a priority. "We must seek opportunities to emphasize our role as modernizers," said Fritz Kuhn, the Green's co-chair.

Green parliamentary leader Kerstin Müller attacked Schröder's plan to delay until 2003 cuts in state pensions. "We're shelving the problems that pensioners face still further into the future," she said, "at the cost of the young. The Greens won't stand for that."

Deputies for the Social Democrats and the Greens voted in strong majorities November 14 to move forward with the pension reform plan. Labor minister Walter Riester said he was sure "this huge reform project would be taken through parliament with determina-

tion." The opposition Christian Democratic Union backs the measure as well.

The government assault on the working class, however, is not smooth sailing, nor moving as quickly as big business would hope. In a "half-term report" card, the *Financial Times* of London remarked that Schröder has not made enough inroads against the unions. Under "labor market," he received a "D" due to "Zero action, and some backsliding. Rather than encouraging flexibility, Schröder has strengthened existing restrictions, reflecting union opposition to reform." These include tightening up worker representation in the workplace and restricting employers' use of short-term job contracts.

## Massachusetts meat packers to hold union vote

BY BEN SUTTON

BOSTON—The National Labor Relations Board ruled against the attempt by Kayem Foods Inc. to include workers and supervisors at a Genoa Sausage packing plant in Woburn, Massachusetts, in a union representation election slated for its plant in Chelsea.

Workers at Kayem Foods will vote November 22 in a second attempt in as many years to be represented by United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1445. The company hoped to dilute the vote at Kayem by including workers and bosses from its Woburn plant where there has been little union activity as of yet. Kayem Foods is the second largest meat processing plant in New England, making hot dogs, hams, bologna, and other deli meats.

As the election date has neared, the company has stepped up its antiunion propaganda, organizing departmental meetings to try to line up workers to vote against the union. "Do not be misled by the big promises of paid union organizers," wrote Kayem president Ray Monkiewicz in an October 3 letter to employees, one of several antiunion tracts issued by the company. "We have all worked very hard to build a good place to work without any outside union coming between us. We have no dues...no fines...no one loses work because of strikes...no one

is asked to risk his or her job by being permanently replaced in a union called strike."

Pro-union workers are reaching out to their co-workers to answer the company propaganda and to tell the truth about the union-organizing campaign.

"We are doing good," said one worker who asked not to be identified in the media. "In front of the company a lot of people are quiet. But when you talk to them outside the plant, people are liberated. People know what they want."

## 'PM' back issues available on website

Perspectivamundial.com, the website for the Spanish-language socialist monthly magazine *Perspectiva Mundial*, has now added links to its back issues. Readers will find that in addition to the current November edition, they can click on "previous issues" and access all the articles for the September and October issues.

Since *Perspectiva Mundial* went on line in September, a growing number of readers of the socialist magazine around the world have begun to use the website for rapid and easy access to it. The site is particularly appreciated by readers in countries where mailed subscriptions can take a couple or even several weeks to arrive.

In Cuba, for example, where *Perspectiva Mundial* has a number of

dedicated readers, some have inquired about upgrading the website to make it possible to read all the issues published. Because of obstacles created by the U.S. embargo on Cuba, mail from the United States to Cuba often takes several weeks.

One reader recently inquired about a talk on "Washington's cold war against Cuba: a historical perspective," given by Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder Press and editor of *New Internationalist* magazine, to a September 23 community forum at Yale University. *PM* translated and ran the entire talk.

Additional volunteers are needed to maintain this website on a monthly basis. Those interested in volunteering can contact *Perspectiva Mundial* by e-mail at themilitant@compuserve.com

*From Pathfinder*

**ABORTION IS A WOMAN'S RIGHT**

**Pat Grogan and others**

Why abortion rights are central to the fight for the full emancipation of women.

**\$3.00**

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# Factionalism in ruling circles around the elections is about future class confrontations

Continued from front page

within the relationship of forces in the world.

In the November 7 election, the two capitalist politicians virtually tied. Neither won enough electoral votes to be elected, with the outcome in Florida being so close that Gore, after initially conceding, called Bush back in the middle of the night to announce he would fight for that state's 25 electors, which will decide the race. As we go to press, Bush holds a minuscule lead of 300 votes in Florida.

Each candidate won about 48 percent of the popular vote, Gore getting barely 230,000 more votes than Bush. Each received the votes of about 25 percent of those eligible to cast a ballot.

In the two houses of Congress, Republicans maintained a majority, with the Senate almost evenly split between the two parties.

In Florida, the Gore campaign has pushed for a manual recount in several counties, alleging irregularities. They hope that in these Democratic-dominated counties a recount will tip the balance in favor of their candidate.

In largely Democratic Palm Beach County, for example, they argue that the larger than expected vote of 3,000 for ultrarightist Reform Party candidate Patrick Buchanan was due to a confusing ballot and that many of the Buchanan votes were actually intended for Gore. Election officials in that county rejected 19,000 ballots because more than one presidential candidate had been marked.

Supporters of Bush, who remains ahead, have opposed the recount efforts, and both sides have gone to court to stake out their case—from the Florida Supreme Court to federal appeals courts in Atlanta. Both sides have also organized small street demonstrations in West Palm Beach and elsewhere to support the maneuvers by their respective campaigns.

## Protests denying ballots to Blacks

Normal voting irregularities aside, Gore has emerged with one advantage in the dispute: exposure of the number of Blacks who faced difficulty in casting a ballot or were prevented from doing so altogether. The wealthy ruling class in the United States does not want government institutions to unnecessarily appear overtly racist. This political question will weigh in the balance of court rulings on various lawsuits and legal challenges, and in the outcome of the elections.

One example of the extent of the problem was a public hearing organized by the NAACP leadership, which has actively campaigned for Gore, in Miami. Some 500 people, mostly African-Americans and Haitians, packed a church community center there November 11. Donnise DeSouza testified about how she and 15 others were told at a polling station that their names

were not on the voter lists and would not be allowed to vote. Fumiko Robinson reported that many of the elderly Blacks she helped carry to the polls in Broward County were similarly turned away.

Other complaints included Haitian-Americans in Miami being prevented from using translators in voting booths and Latino voters in Osceola County who said they had to produce two kinds of ID when one was required. Others accused the Florida Highway Patrol of harassing Blacks by set-

ting fascist politician seeking to recruit a committed cadre that, over time, will become a street-fighting movement posing a deadly threat to the labor movement. Regardless of Buchanan's vote total, working people have to confront racist, rightist, and fascist-minded forces on the streets today, such as workers standing up to a campaign of thuggery against immigrant workers in Long Island, New York, organized by an ultrarightist outfit.

The stretched-out conclusion of the U.S.

in recent years to curtail political space and beef up the police are a threat to working people, but the U.S. rulers are pressing for such moves in anticipation of the inevitable social conflicts of the future, not because of the level of working-class struggle today.

The divisions expressed today are largely ideological ones, not disputes over immediate practical policies. They stem from the historic weakening of U.S. imperialism over the past decades and the challenge the rulers face in taking on the working class and its allies. Despite inroads they have made in attacking workers' social wage, the U.S. rulers have failed to roll back the basic gains won by working people in the labor battles of the 1930s and the civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s. Internationally, they have failed to overthrow the workers states in Russia and elsewhere.

Because the differences are about the future, and compromise cannot be achieved over ideological differences, the factionalism has generated more heat than the immediate situation would justify.

The breakdown in civil tone of debate is part of the increasingly coarsening rhetoric that has marked bourgeois politics for the past decade. This coarseness is often initiated by rightist forces, aimed at heightening resentment in the middle classes and undermining social solidarity among working people. The last major example of this was the impeachment proceedings against President William Clinton early last year, where millions of working people sensed the ultimate target of the rightists who took the initiative was not Clinton but the social gains won by Blacks, women, and working people as a whole.

## Bipartisan antilabor offensive

Whether it ends up being Gore or Bush, the new occupant of the White House will, together with Congress, take as its starting point the bipartisan anti-working-class course carried out by the Clinton administration. Under Clinton and Congress, the Democratic-Republican government launched a wide array of attacks on workers' social wage and democratic rights. This included dismantling "welfare as we know it," which has since led to proposals to "reform" Social Security that begin to undermine its character as a universal entitlement for all working people.

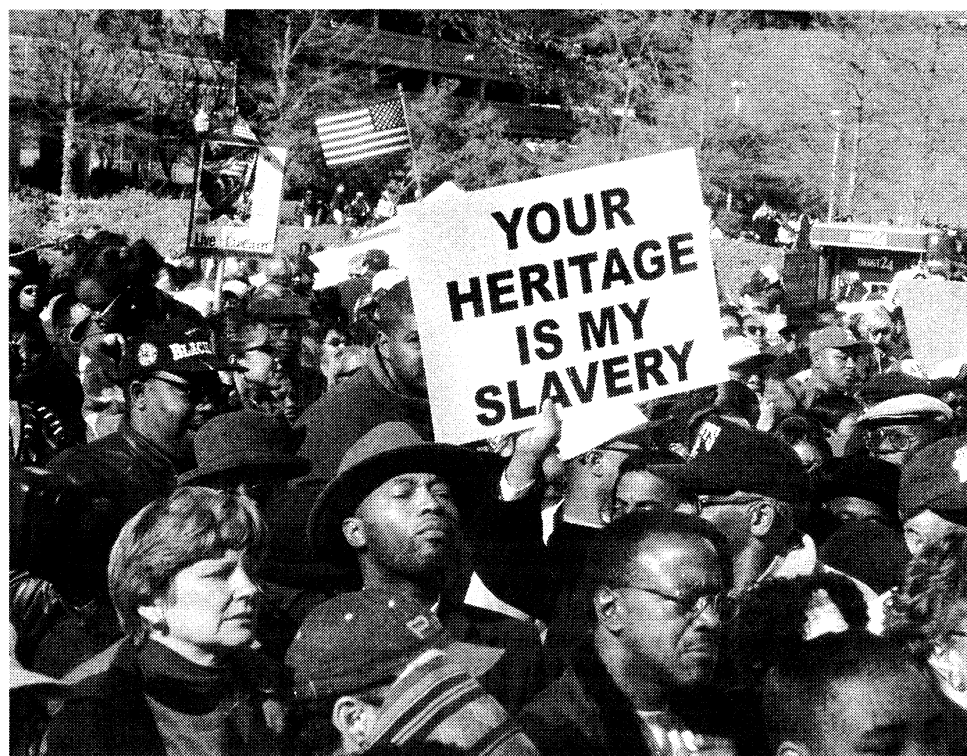
The Clinton administration signed a series of bills that reinforced the size and powers of the hated federal immigration police, put tens of thousands more cops on the street, undermined the constitutional protections against arbitrary search and seizure, and accelerated the use of the death penalty, among other measures aimed against working people.

The moves made by the new administration along this same bipartisan course, however, will meet increased working-class resistance, as the U.S. rulers have discovered in recent years. The very fact that Haitians who were denied to right to vote in Florida are raising a hue and cry today is a reminder of the historic changes that have taken place in U.S. politics and the problems the employers and their government face: an increasingly internationalized working class that is gaining self-confidence and is responding to their attacks.

What vanguard workers and farmers are doing across the country today is preparing for the future, as are the capitalists. But rather than defending the devastation of war, racist assaults, oppression of women, and the brutalities of exploitation that are the hallmarks of capitalist society, the most advanced sections of working people are fighting for a world where social solidarity and mutual collaboration can harness the potential of humanity's creative and productive powers for all.

Those leading struggles by packing-house workers, coal miners, farm workers, janitors, garment workers, transportation workers, and others to build unions, defend dignity on the job, and protect past gains; farmers organizing to defend their land and right to a livelihood, who are reaching out to other rural toilers in Cuba, the United Kingdom, and elsewhere; working people fighting anti-immigrant assaults and racist attacks; and working women seeking ways to defend their rights and economic well-

Continued on Page 14



Militant/Floyd Fowler

**Thousands rally in Columbia, South Carolina, in January to demand government take down Confederate battle flag from atop capitol building. Dispute over outcome of U.S. presidential elections reflects anticipation of future class battles in which ruling billionaire families will seek to reverse gains won by Blacks and other working people.**

ting up checkpoints near a polling area in a Black community outside Tallahassee.

Such cases, which sound familiar to many working people around the country, especially those who are Black, are a permanent part of the reality of U.S. elections, under Democratic and Republican politicians alike. The Gore forces are trying to use these cases to their advantage.

In that context the Florida Supreme Court rejected a request from Florida secretary of state Katherine Harris to block the manual recounts. The court ruling, while far from the final word, gave the Democrats a boost as officials in Broward and Palm Beach counties began a hand count of 1 million ballots.

Many pundits have noted that Buchanan received relatively few votes, both in Florida and nationally. While the Reform Party candidate admitted that his campaign won less electoral support than he had expected, partly due to health problems that curtailed his campaigning, Buchanan is not primarily looking for votes. He is an incipi-

presidential elections has precipitated a flood of commentary in the big-business media. Most of the analysis offered today by the "experts," however—about a constitutional crisis, a weakened mandate, a need to "reform" the electoral process, and so on—is hot air.

## Factionalism among bourgeois forces

The only crisis is the fact that it is an extremely close election. It's true that capitalist institutions today are proving more brittle than ever, as seen by the beginning of the breakdown of the two-party system. But there is no reason to think that the new president—Gore or Bush—will be weakened by these elections. He will, in fact, continue the course carried out under Clinton and Congress. The new administration will act, based not on a "public mandate" but on what the ruling class dictates. To take one well-known example, Harry Truman was elected in 1948 by such a slim margin that major newspapers announced the victory of his opponent, Thomas Dewey. But that didn't prevent Truman from aggressively carrying out major policies on behalf of the U.S. rulers at home and abroad.

The end of the 2000 election campaign has been marked above all by factionalism among the two major capitalist parties. Democratic campaign manager William Daley denounced the Bush campaign's efforts to block Gore's bid in Florida as "an injustice unparalleled in our history."

The *New York Post*, which supports Bush, ran a front-page editorial November 13 condemning Gore for "the hijacking of the presidency" because of his moves to recount ballots.

In some cases the rhetoric has been coarser. Republican Senate majority leader Trent Lott responded to the election of Hillary Rodham Clinton to the U.S. Senate by joking that lightning might strike her before she joins him in the Capitol. Many supporters of women's rights sense that—despite the fact that Clinton is no friend of working people—such right-wing attacks on her are actually aimed at every woman who acts like a political person and refuses to accept second-class status.

## Conflict is over anticipation of future

The factionalism surrounding the election outcome is not primarily about the present but about the future. Similarly, the bipartisan steps taken by the government



Militant/Jacque Henderson

**Locked-out Steelworkers from Kaiser Aluminum protest in May at Kaiser and Maxxam shareholders' meetings in Houston. Capitalists and their political servants in the White House and elsewhere know they must take on and defeat working people at home and abroad to salvage their crisis-ridden profit system.**

# Pathfinder was born with the

Reprinted below are excerpts from *Pathfinder Was Born with the October Revolution*, by Mary-Alice Waters. This new Pathfinder pamphlet is scheduled to be released in Spanish in late November—in time for the Guadalajara International Book Fair—and in English in early December. It is a presentation to a conference on “Political and Social Publishing in the 1990s” held Feb. 2–3, 1998, in Havana. Waters was among several speakers who addressed the meeting, sponsored by Casa Editora Abril, publishing house of the Union of Young Communists (UJC) of Cuba. Copyright © 2000 by Pathfinder Press; reprinted by permission. Subheadings and footnote are in the original.

BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

Pathfinder Press was born with the October Revolution. As a publishing house, our direct line of continuity goes back to the earliest publication in the United States of speeches and writings by Lenin, on the eve of the 1917 revolutions in Russia. That is when magazines like the *International Socialist Review*, produced in the United States by left-wing militants in the Socialist Party, began publishing articles by the Bolshevik leader.

## Origins in 1919

Following the victorious October 1917 insurrection of the workers, peasants, and soldiers of the tsarist empire, which opened the road to the first socialist revolution, revolutionary-minded working people the world over sought to understand and follow the example of the first worker-bolsheviks. By 1919 a regroupment of left-wing Socialists, members of the Industrial Workers of the World, and others had come together in the United States to found something truly new—the communist movement in North America, whose explicit goal was to emulate the Bolsheviks. Through many and varied channels they began to publish the periodicals, pamphlets, and books that for the first time in the 20th century brought to the working class in our hemisphere a communist perspective that drew on the toilers’ initial experience of taking power, defending it, and using it worldwide.

I start with this because it is the clearest way I can explain what guides the editorial policy of Pathfinder to this day. For more than 80 years, Pathfinder and its various predecessors (from Merit and Pioneer, all the way back to the Literature Department of the Workers Party of America) have had one and only one objective: to publish and distribute as widely as possible the books, pamphlets, and magazines that are necessary to advance the construction of a communist party in the United States—an objective inseparable from the building of a communist movement internationally.

From 1917 to today, we have sought to defend a course true to Lenin’s leadership of the Russian Revolution and the early

years of the Communist International. Lenin’s political trajectory was the opposite of the course that later became identified with the Stalin-led Communist Party of the Soviet Union—the consequences of which are being registered in the colossal

the position of the proletariat” in its struggle with the bourgeoisie and the “theoretical summation of the conditions for the liberation of the proletariat” and its allies from exploitation and oppression.

To bring this home for us today, I want



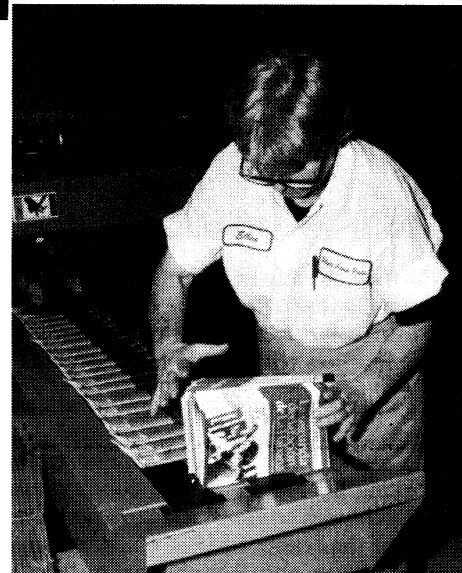
Above: Bohemia; right, Militant/Hilda Cuzco Cuban peasants sign Second Declaration of Havana. Since the revolutionary call to action to the toilers of the Americas was issued in February 1962, Pathfinder has kept it in print. “We still use it to explain the character of U.S. domination of Latin America and the place of the Cuban Revolution in the uncompromising struggle against it,” says Waters. Right: Pathfinder printshop volunteer stacks latest printing of pamphlet this year.

events of recent years that continue to unfold throughout Central Europe, the Balkans, and the former Soviet republics. Pathfinder has always prioritized printing works created by revolutionists who exemplified Lenin’s internationalist and proletarian course in deeds as well as words.

We begin with the world and the ongoing facts before us, with the most important challenges of the world class struggle, thinking about how to strengthen the fighting vanguard of the working class so it is better armed to understand the world in which we live; to understand the history of the modern working-class movement; to become more conscious of its strength and historic responsibilities; and to chart a line of march toward taking power in order to open the road to the construction of socialism.

## A movement, not a doctrine

We have always subscribed to Engels’s famous response to Herr Heinzen, written in 1847 a few months before Karl Marx and Frederick Engels drafted the founding document of the modern workers movement, the Communist Manifesto. “Communism is not a doctrine, but a movement,” Engels wrote. “It proceeds not from principles but from facts. Insofar as it is a theory, [it] is the theoretical expression of



to use the example of one of the most important books that Pathfinder has published in the last eight years. It is entitled *U.S. Hands Off the Mideast! Cuba Speaks Out at the United Nations*. It was published in English and Spanish in October 1990 as Washington was driving toward the horrendous, massive assault on Iraq that began in January 1991. Cuba’s then-ambassador to the United Nations, Ricardo Alarcón, speaking from the seat Cuba fortuitously held on the Security Council, was the only voice speaking out clearly and consistently, utilizing the arena of international diplomacy, against the imperialist war being mounted under the auspices of the United Nations flag.

Pathfinder, in a matter of days (literally) brought out a small booklet containing each and every one of Alarcón’s speeches to the world, along with the main speech by Fidel condemning Washington’s aggression. When that sold out in a few weeks, we printed a second, expanded edition, so that communists and anti-imperialist fighters around the world could use it to campaign against the war that the magazine *New Internationalist* rightly calls “the opening guns of World War III.”

In the short space of six months, Pathfinder sold some 10,000 copies of that title in English, and 1,500 in Spanish.

Today, as Washington is again accelerating toward a new murderous—and cowardly—assault on the people of Iraq, that Pathfinder title takes on renewed importance.<sup>1</sup> The fact that—as is our policy—we have not allowed the book to go out of print means that our weapons are ready, and, as we meet here, it is again being used by opponents of Washington’s course around the world.

In a similar way, 30 years ago Pathfinder published another book—*Che Guevara Speaks*. In December 1967, only weeks after the death in combat of Ernesto Che Guevara, while news of his brutal murder by CIA-trained forces of the Bolivian military dictatorship and the implications of

that event still resounded like a drumbeat around the world, Pathfinder published the first edition of that collection of speeches and writings. We have not allowed it to go out of print from that day to this.

♦

Briefly, I would like to enumerate some of the facts and policies that guide our publishing efforts. I hope they will provoke some discussion and comment.

1. Pathfinder is not formally or legally the publishing house of a party (it has its own corporate structure and lines of decision-making). At the same time, from the beginning the writers, editors, directors, and production personnel have all been active communist cadres in the United States (communists with a small ‘c’), experienced in the working-class movement. Pathfinder is the publishing house that has always kept in print the major documents, resolutions, and speeches by leaders of the Socialist Workers Party. In the historical perspective, this is one of its most important and irreplaceable accomplishments. Without this the documents that both reflect and guide the practical work of communist workers, students and their allies in the United States would be nowhere available.

*The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions* by SWP national secretary Jack Barnes—a new edition of which has been published by Pathfinder in three languages (English, Spanish, and French)—is the most recent important example of this central core of our publishing.

## Produced in heat of political battles

2. As has been true throughout the history of the workers movement, the best materials we publish are almost without exception those produced by revolutionists in the heat of political battle—not abstract analyses or distanced studies, but pamphlets and books written by those who are responding to the needs of the day.

One of the best examples of this is a book written in the anti-Nazi underground during World War II by a young Belgian, who was a Jew. *The Jewish Question*, by Abram Leon, perhaps the finest historical materialist study of this question ever to be written, was put down on paper while Leon was active in the underground. He finished it only a short time before he was captured and died at the hands of the Gestapo. Sailors, merchant marine men who were members of the SWP and often acted as couriers internationally, were able to salvage a copy of the manuscript in the closing days of the war. Pathfinder translated it, published it, and has kept it in print for decades.

Since 1928 when the *Militant* first began publishing—and 1931 when Pathfinder’s predecessor Pioneer Publishers produced its first title—there has always been a close working collaboration between the newspaper and the publishing house. Many of the materials that eventually find their way into Pathfinder publications first appear in the pages of the *Militant*. It couldn’t be otherwise with a publishing house that is always in the thick of struggles and seeking to promote a clear class perspective.

From the beginning of the Cuban Revolution, for example, the *Militant* has been the main periodical in the United States that published important documents and speeches by leaders of the Cuban Revolution. These were often then rapidly reprinted by Pioneer Publishers as pamphlets



Militant/Stu Singer

United Mine Workers members from Wyoming and New Mexico, on strike against Pittsburg and Midway Coal, picket company headquarters in Denver in July. “We begin with the world and the ongoing facts before us, with the most important challenges of the world class struggle, thinking about how to strengthen the fighting vanguard of the working class so it is better armed to understand the world.”



# October Revolution

and used widely by the active defenders of the Cuban Revolution both in the United States and Canada, many of whom organized themselves during the revolution's opening years as the Fair Play for Cuba Committee.

In the days before photo-offset printing, it was especially important to be able to reuse the hot-lead type set for the newspaper, which was by far the costliest element in the printing process.

Pamphlets such as *The Second Declaration of Havana* were first published this way, for example—another title that Pathfinder has kept continuously in print, in this case since 1962. Tomorrow, in fact—February 4—we will be marking the 35th anniversary of that call to action to the toilers of the Americas. We still use it widely as one of the best and most basic pieces of literature we have to explain the character of U.S. imperialist domination of Latin America, the inevitable resistance to it, and the place of the Cuban Revolution in that uncompromising resistance....

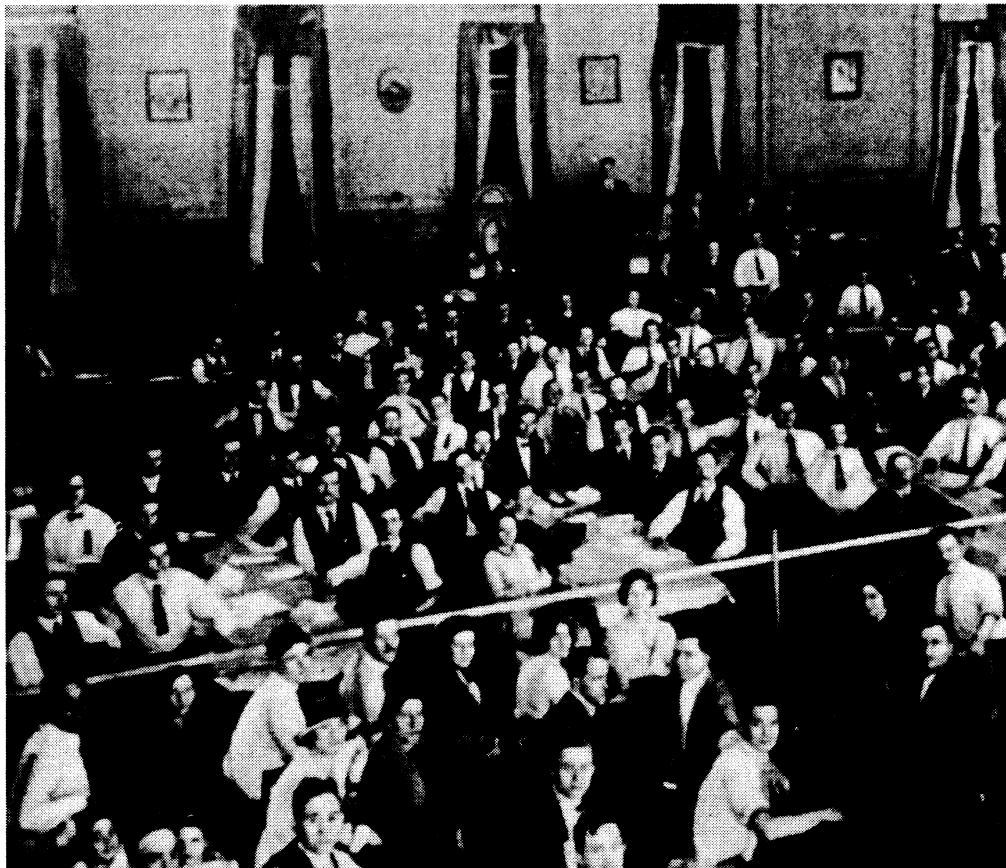
## Depend on volunteer labor

6. Pathfinder is only able to maintain this kind of publishing program because of the generous support of communist-minded workers around the world. They subsidize our publishing program because they agree with it, and they make real sacrifices to keep these revolutionary weapons in print. Pathfinder loses money on every book it publishes. It has never had a year, or even a quarter, when it broke even.

The economics of publishing quality books in small runs means that even with such subsidies Pathfinder books are expensive for working people. For this reason, several years ago we set up the Pathfinder Reader's Club to make our books accessible to more readers. For \$10 per year anyone can join the club, and receive all Pathfinder titles at 15 percent off the cover price at any Pathfinder bookstore, or by ordering directly. And throughout the year we offer even higher discounts on selected titles.

We also depend on volunteer labor by Pathfinder's supporters to translate, copyedit, proofread, scan and format, set type, design covers—some of which are truly beautiful—and do all the other time-consuming work that is necessary to produce and distribute printed materials.

In fact, we have just begun what will surely be one of our most ambitious endeavors, ever, all with volunteer labor. Some 200 Pathfinder supporters from almost a dozen countries around the world, are now preparing every single title currently in print by Pathfinder in digital form. Every book and pamphlet is being scanned, proofread and formatted, and often indexed. Every cover and photo signature is being reconstructed in digital files. Thanks to this enormous effort, which will take several years to complete, Pathfinder will be able



Founding convention of the Communist Party in United States, Sept. 1, 1919. "Revolutionary-minded working people the world over sought to emulate the example of the first worker-bolsheviks," says Waters. Communist movement in North America "began to publish the periodicals, pamphlets, and books that brought to the working class a communist perspective that drew on the toilers' experience of taking power, defending it, and using it worldwide." Pathfinder prints and reprints such material so that it can be used in building a party of communist workers. Inset: selling revolutionary literature at entrance to poultry plant in North Carolina.



Inset: Militant/Stu Singer

to continue to take advantage of advances in computer-to-plate printing technology. We will be able to print small quantities, reprint frequently as demand requires, and continue to upgrade new editions as our resources permit.

Every title will be ready-to-print as needed. And we will also be able to develop a Pathfinder web site to make the fruits of this effort accessible around the world. Without the volunteer labor of our supporters around the world, none of this would be possible...

7. The sale and distribution of Pathfinder titles also depends on the volunteer efforts of supporters. First and foremost, Pathfinder sales are "street sales"—sales by communist youth and workers off folding card tables set up regularly on street corners in workers districts, at plant gates, on university campuses, near high schools, at political events, wherever workers and young people capable of being attracted toward revolutionary politics may gather.

An international network of Pathfinder bookstores in seven countries is another important source of sales. These also are organized completely by volunteers, by workers and students who organize to keep the stores open as many hours a week as possible.

The same volunteers also act as sales representatives, visiting regular commercial bookstores, libraries, and professors in dozens and dozens of cities, discussing the books with buyers and teachers. They obtain orders that are placed either directly with Pathfinder or through wholesale distribution businesses that buy from Pathfinder as well as other publishers.

Through these kinds of volunteer efforts—which include taking Pathfinder booths to numerous international book fairs around the world, from Moscow to Frankfurt, from Tehran to Göteborg, from Guadalajara, to Sydney, to Havana—the reach of our publication effort is truly surprising....

## Exacting and demanding standards

For us, the care with which we edit and prepare every single book or pamphlet we produce is the most important test of our publishing efforts. We consider this to be a class question. If it is to prepare itself to be the ruling class, the working class must have access to truth, to culture, to clearly presented, accurate information. Their own history and continuity must be made accessible to new generations of fighters as they enter the struggle. These are things that Che understood and fought for so well. The working class must learn to be exacting in

the standards of quality it demands in all things. That is one of the sources of our self-respect and self-confidence. Those who belong to the class that produces everything know better than anyone when work is done with care and when it is shoddy and unworthy of their efforts.

A publishing house that strives above all to provide revolutionary fighters with access to the world class struggle that they must know about and understand in order to be effective in transforming themselves and that world—a publishing house with such a goal must maintain the highest possible standards of accuracy.

A misspelled name; an incorrect date; an erroneous or confusing or even uncomfortable translation; an inaccurate footnote or caption (or none at all where one is needed for the new young reader or the worker or farmer for whom reading is still a challenge); lack of care in presenting pictures, maps, or other aids to the reader;

covers that are ugly or lack inspiration and work; printing that is too light and unreadable; type that is so small it discourages the reader; a book that is carelessly bound or cut—all these are lapses that pain us when they occur. And they should. They are not worthy of the working class and its historic tasks.

None of these flow from problems created by the limits on material resources from which we all suffer one way or another. They are questions of political training and discipline and respect for our class. They exemplify proletarian habits, which are the wellspring of discipline.

At root, these are the same questions that were at the center of the deliberations and decisions of the Fifth Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba when it convened a few months ago, in October 1997: the revolution, the working class, has to prove it can be *more* efficient, and produce with *greater* quality than the capitalists. And it can....

## From Pathfinder

### New title

#### Pathfinder Was Born with the October Revolution

Mary-Alice Waters

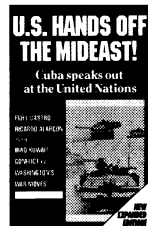
Spanish edition available in November, English in December. \$3.00

#### The Jewish Question

A Marxist Interpretation

Abram Leon

Traces the historical rationalizations of anti-Semitism to the fact that Jews—in the centuries preceding the domination of industrial capitalism—were forced to become a "people-class" of merchants and moneylenders. Leon explains why the propertied rulers in times of social crisis incite renewed Jew-hatred today. \$17.95



#### U.S. Hands off the Mideast!

Cuba Speaks Out at the United Nations

Fidel Castro, Ricardo Alarcón

The case against Washington's 1990-91 embargo and war against Iraq, as presented by the Cuban government at the United Nations. \$10.95

#### The Second Declaration of Havana

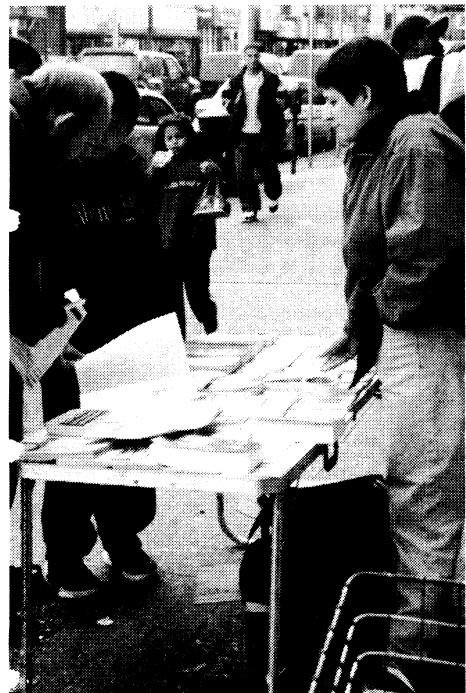
In 1962, as the example of Cuba's socialist revolution spread throughout the Americas, the workers and farmers of Cuba issued their uncompromising call for a continent-wide revolutionary struggle. Also available in Spanish, French, and Greek. \$4.50

#### Che Guevara Speaks

Selected Speeches and Writings

"A faithful reflection of Che as he was, or, better, as he developed"—from the preface by Joseph Hansen. Includes works not available elsewhere in English. \$14.95

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Tel: (212) 741-0690. Fax: (212) 727-0150. When ordering by mail, please include \$3 to cover shipping and handling.



Militant/Carole Lesnick

Selling Pathfinder books and socialist press in a workers district in Sunset Park, Brooklyn. "The sale and distribution of Pathfinder titles depends on the volunteer efforts of its supporters," explains Waters. "First and foremost, Pathfinder sales are 'street sales.'"

# Argentine gov't squeezes workers to pay debt

BY HILDA CUZCO

In a nationally televised address November 10, Argentine president Fernando de la Rúa said the country is "in bad shape" and announced a austerity package required by the International Monetary Fund and other imperialist financial institutions in order to avert default on \$123 billion in foreign debt.

In exchange for "firm and solid support" and a \$10 billion line of credit from the IMF to pay loans, de la Rúa agreed to press forward measures that will fall most heavily on the shoulders of working people in the South American country.

Argentina's economy contracted 3.1 percent last year, pushing official unemployment up from 14.5 to 16 percent. One of the demands of the imperialists was to urgently "reduce deficits of the larger provinces" and ensure tax collection, as stated by an IMF report, which added that the government will have to make "difficult policy choices."

In addition to the economic slump, working people in Argentina have been hit by massive layoffs as a result of the sales of state enterprises under the previous regime of Carlos Menem. These conditions have spurred protests against unemployment and for relief from high consumer prices.

Truckers in the capital city Buenos Aires stopped deliveries at the beginning of October demanding lower prices for diesel fuel and highway toll fees. In Salta, northern Argentina, a protest of 100 unemployed workers was attacked by the police who killed Anibal Verón, a 37 year-old driver and mechanic who had been fired from his job a year ago. Verón, along with others, was demanding jobs, food, and better living conditions when 400 police harassed them ordering them to leave.

The police killing of Verón prompted the Argentine Workers Federation (CTA) to call a nationwide strike. The Confederation of General Workers announced other protests while the transportation union called for an immediate work stoppage for several hours.

When De la Rúa took office 11 months ago, his popularity was high. As head of the Alliance Party, a coalition of the traditional liberal Radical Party and another bourgeois outfit called FREPASO, he won the elections as a new face and lesser evil, although there were no major policy differences with former president Carlos Menem of the

Peronist Party.

Since it assumed office, de la Rúa's administration has been "rewarded" with new loans from the IMF for steps that have chipped away at previous social conquests of working people in Argentina. In his first month in office, de la Rúa adopted budget cuts, imposed consumer tax hikes, and re-

for falling tax revenues and falling prices for export commodities such as wheat and soya, leading to a crisis in how to pay interest coming due on the enormous foreign debt. Earlier this month the government issued a new round of one-year treasury bills and had to pay a 16 percent interest rate, almost double that paid in July. The addi-

pension plans with private companies. The retirement age for women workers was increased from 60 to 65 years old.

The package includes tax cuts to enterprises and capitalist investors as well a halt to increases in government funding to the provinces for the next five years.

At the center of de la Rúa's moves is an attack on labor law. A bill approved last February by the lower house of Congress would end industry-wide contract bargaining, won through battles to organize unions following World War II, and allow bosses to negotiate agreements plant by plant. It erodes the protection of workers on the job by extending the probation period for new employees from one month to six, with the right of the boss to extend it another six months. The bill also ends automatic extension of union contracts during negotiations once the current contract expires.

The Senate's approval of this antilabor law has been the center of a recent government scandal. Eleven senators allegedly accepted bribes to vote for the law, placing de la Rúa's government on the spot. The adoption of this measure is required for his austerity package to receive the blessing of the IMF.

The scandal has already led to the resignation of Vice President Carlos Alvarez. The vice president called for a more sweeping investigation, noting the government "will further weaken itself if it does not take decisive action into what happened in the Senate."



Thousands marched in Buenos Aires, Argentina's capital, May 31 against the austerity measures announced by the government of president Fernando de la Rúa, as unemployment steadily rose.

stricted funding for the most depressed provinces. Last January the president decreed that health care plans for workers would fall under the jurisdiction of the health ministry and not the unions.

But these measures failed to compensate

tional interest alone amounts to \$40 million a year.

De la Rúa's most recent austerity package includes a pension plan "reform." This reportedly will eliminate the government retirement plan, forcing workers to seek

## 60,000 auto workers in Brazil walk out

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

Some 60,000 auto workers in São Paulo, Brazil, walked off the job November 13 demanding a 10 percent pay increase. The strike affected production at several car companies, including General Motors, Ford, Toyota, Volkswagen, and Scania A.B. The auto makers are offering a 6.5 to 8 percent wage hike.

The walkout brought car production to a halt in São Paulo, where 60 percent of the country's automobiles are produced. The strike is expected to spread to parts companies, union officials stated.

The auto bosses have been pressing the workforce to speed up production in order

to meet rising demand for vehicles. Car sales in Brazil soared 37 percent in October compared to last year, according to the National Association of Automobile Manufacturers.

José Pinheiro Neto, president of the employers organization and a vice president of General Motors of Brazil, tried to appeal to nationalist sentiments, saying the workers should accept the bosses' wage proposal because "we have to be competitive not only in Brazil, but also outside of the country as well."

Pay rates for workers in the auto industry remain at 1994 levels and workers are pushing to improve their wages as the economy comes out of a slump. Last January the buying power of workers' wages declined 7 percent as a result of the devaluation of the Brazilian currency.

Unemployment in São Paulo, the

country's industrial center, stands at 17 percent and it has increased to the highest levels since the mid-1980s in other metropolitan areas.

"With the economy recovering, our members feel there is space for a real wage increase," stated a union official.

Meanwhile, workers in other industries have also organized labor actions demanding a pay raise. Nearly half of the 11,500 employees at the state-owned energy utility, Cemig, have been on strike since early November demanding a 39 percent wage increase.

Oil workers called off a nationwide strike November 12 against the state-owned oil utility Petrobras when the company offered a 7 percent pay hike and a productivity bonus. The deal averages out to an 8 percent wage increase for the industry's 35,000 workers.

## Workers at Dakota Premium win UFCW union certification

Continued from front page  
dent Esteban Cortinas.

"Cortinas didn't announce whether the union had won or lost. He talked in circles, I think on purpose, to confuse people," said Miguel Olvera, a boning worker and leader of the fight for a union at Dakota Premium Foods. "Cortinas looked like he was going to cry," said kill floor worker José Estrada. "He said the company wanted to take this to a higher court."

A dozen workers went to Local 789's hall after work to discuss the NLRB decision and the next steps forward.

The NLRB finally "recognized what we had already won," said Olvera. "Now we can take the next step forward. We were being held back, and some people were feeling demoralized. We have to rekindle the energy that people had."

"Now we've got to get everyone together and ask for the contract that we all want,"

said Enrique Flores, a kill-floor worker.

Local 789's Communications Committee planned a meeting the following day to organize a general membership meeting of Dakota Premium Food workers as soon as possible, said Local 789 union representative Francisco Picado.

A new issue of the *Workers' Voice*, the union's paper produced and distributed by workers, explaining the NLRB decision is planned for the following day as well, Picado said.

*Workers' Voice* is also distributed in Long Prairie Packing, another beef slaughterhouse owned by Rosen's Diversified in Minnesota. The 300 workers there are also members of UFCW Local 789.

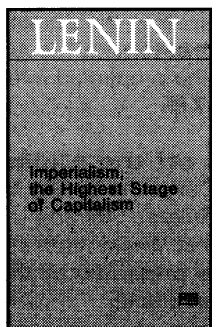
Union members at this plant have been defending their union against company harassment and intimidation, and discussing their fight together with workers at Dakota Premium.

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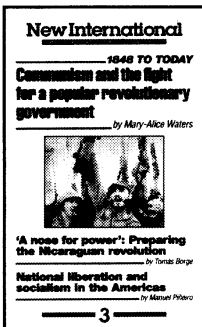
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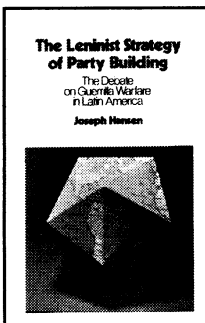
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# European powers face decline in euro and foreign policy divisions

BY CARL-ERIK ISACSSON

STOCKHOLM, Sweden—The euro has fallen by 30 percent—reaching a record low of less than 82 cents in late October—from its inauguration in January 1999.

The currency's stability has been undermined from birth because of the conflicting interests of the rival capitalist ruling classes it pretends to yoke together. At the same time, European capitalists continue to rely on it as a common unit to conduct business among each other more effectively and to trade with countries in eastern Europe and elsewhere.

Concerned about the impact of the devaluation of this currency on the world economy and their own economies, the central banks of all the so-called Group of Seven countries—the United States, Germany, Japan, France, United Kingdom, Italy, and Canada—had together purchased about 6 billion euros September 22 to drive up the European currency. On October 5 the European Central Bank pushed interest rates up one quarter of a percentage point to 4.75 percent, its seventh increase in less than a year.

The rate increase came as a surprise, as it threatens to undercut the upturn in the business cycle in France and Germany, the major economies in the euro zone. The same week, France had registered its biggest single-month slump in consumer confidence in five years, with that index dropping to its lowest level in 14 months. In Germany business confidence fell for the third consecutive month in August.

The declining euro has contributed to a rise in annual inflation in the euro zone to 2.8 percent in September—well above the 2 percent goal of the European Central Bank (ECB). Rising dollar-denominated prices on oil, which have tripled since the launch of the euro, was a major factor in the inflation in the “euro zone,” which imports all its oil.

In early November the European Central Bank again intervened in the currency market and bought some 1 billion euros. The ECB said it acted “owing to concern about the global and domestic repercussions of the exchange rate of the euro, including its impact on price stability.” The Group of Seven governments did not intervene this time, and intervention was even discouraged by U.S. treasury secretary Larry Summers, who said Washington stood by its long-standing “strong dollar policy.”

The ECB was supposed to underpin a slight rebound of the euro with its intervention by purchasing the one billion euros, as growth figures for the U.S. economy released for the third quarter were weaker than expected. Bad news for the U.S. economy has been good news for the euro in the currency markets, but with the influence of the U.S. economy on the rest of the world, a slowing U.S. economy will slow down European growth too. The decline of the euro since its launch actually sparked an export-led spurt in growth, especially in Germany and France, which make up about half of the euro zone's economy, as goods produced in Europe became cheaper on a booming U.S. market.

The main reason for the decline of the euro is that over the last two decades the U.S. rulers have been more successful than their European rivals in getting concessions from unions, enforcing speedup on the job, and holding the line on wage increases. With the partial exception of the United Kingdom, the capitalist powers in Europe are years behind the U.S. rulers in “downsizing” and imposing what the employers call “labor flexibility.” They remain behind in extending working hours, slashing wages, and implementing multi-tier wage agreements.

Recent government attacks on workers' social wage in Germany and France, masked as “tax reforms,” have not changed this longer-term trend of U.S. capitalism's competitive edge over its European rivals.

The competitive edge of the U.S. capitalists is illustrated by the capital flows from Europe to the United States. European capitalists purchased \$210 billion worth of U.S. stocks and corporate bonds in 1999, according to figures from the International Mon-

etary Fund. These portfolio investments have been supplemented by increasing direct investments. In August 2000 alone, the net outflow of direct investment from the euro zone to the United States was \$46 billion.

## EU has no common foreign policy

Washington's economic might is backed up by its military predominance over the European capitalist powers, which cannot act as a bloc with a common foreign policy because of conflicting interests among each other. Divisions over foreign policy among the major European imperialist powers are now being played out over relations with the governments of Israel, north Korea, and Yugoslavia after the downfall of the Milosevic regime.

A United Nations General Assembly resolution condemning the Israeli regime's violence against the Palestinians was backed by the representatives from France, Greece, Spain, and Ireland. The delegates from Germany, Britain, Sweden, Italy, and the Netherlands abstained. Meanwhile, French president Jacques Chirac, who currently holds the revolving presidency of the European Union, undermined the Clinton administration's efforts in Paris, where U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright sought a cease-fire while pressuring the Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat to rein in protests in the occupied territories.

According to an article in the October 26 *International Herald Tribune* titled “Deals and Nationalism Hobble EU,” Chirac “dressed down [Israeli prime minister Ehud] Barak, and told Mr. Arafat to hold out for more than he was getting from the Israelis.” Paris's actions, of course, are guided not by sympathy for the Palestinians but by its efforts to increase French imperialist influence in the Mideast.

At the same time, both Berlin and London moved to recognize north Korea without informing Paris, causing further tensions between these imperialist governments.

And in recent budget talks within the European Union, the governments of Mediterranean countries, led by Paris, refused to accept a reduction in what they receive from EU funds to cover some of the funding that is supposed to go to Yugoslavia.

## Dependence on U.S. military might

“My fear is we will see European nations construct a new bureaucracy,” U.S. defense secretary William Cohen told a high-level transatlantic security conference in Munich, Germany, earlier this year. Cohen said the EU could not field a 60,000-strong “crisis reaction force” by 2003 as decided in Helsinki last December, if the member states continued to cut military spending. He acknowledged they could save money by downsizing Cold War military structures, but unless the savings are spent on new rapid deployment forces, “we will not see the capabilities talked about so passionately,” Cohen warned the EU.

Proportionally the imperialist governments in Europe spend on the military about two-thirds of what Washington does. But their military capabilities are nowhere close. Aside from Washington, only London can fire cruise missiles, and even the few held by the Royal Navy are made and loaded in the United States. Only the U.S. government has satellite-guided bombs, airborne battlefield reconnaissance, and other such sophisticated weaponry. Of the 2,000 targets chosen by NATO in Yugoslavia, all but one were selected by U.S. intelligence.

To really challenge Washington, the European powers would have to increase their military spending considerably. The fact that the U.S. rulers spend \$36 billion a year on military research and the rest of NATO only \$10 billion illustrates the gap in military power. In contrast to the United States, where the Clinton administration has increased military spending, the debate in Europe is mostly about restructuring the military forces within the existing budgets. Germany, the state representing the biggest share of the EU's economy, spent 1.3 percent of its gross domestic product in 1999



German troops train for “peacekeeping” missions. Divisions among European imperialist powers have slowed their efforts to put together a “crisis reaction” military force.

on the military, down from 1.6 percent in 1997 and well below the 3.4 percent of the United States.

Cohen expressed the U.S. rulers' demand that the European powers take on their share of the responsibility for the imperialists' attempt to police the world, an operation that is overwhelmingly led and funded by Washington. That is one of Washington's main concerns. As political powderkegs continue to explode in the post-Cold War world, Washington is increasingly acting alone in deploying its military. It is not only that the imperialists in Europe don't have the military forces strong enough to intervene and lead military operations around the globe. They also constantly divide over where and in what numbers to deploy troops—from the Balkans to the Middle East to Asia.

## Potentially destabilizing effect

The euro represents a set of social relations that reflect the relatively weak standing of the ruling classes in Europe have with respect to both the working class at home and their capitalist rivals in other parts of the world—especially the United States—on the military, political, and economic fronts.

As with its military strength, U.S. capital is alone in its capacity to use its relatively strong dollar to avert financial crises around the world. The strong dollar is the product of the relative success of the bipartisan policies of the Clinton administration, and the prospects for the U.S. rulers to continue that policy hinge on a strong dollar in the years ahead.

The creation of the euro has not meant that a potential world currency has been created that could replace the U.S. dollar in the way the dollar replaced the pound sterling after World War I. Instead, the euro has a potentially destabilizing impact on the whole financial system that was built around the U.S. dollar after World War II. The fact that the euro has fallen 30 percent in relation to the U.S. dollar contributes to imbal-

ances in the U.S. economy and the world capitalist system, such as the enormous U.S. trade deficit. The euro is depressing earnings of some major U.S. companies like Intel, whose shares fell 20 percent—knocking out \$80 billion of its market capitalization—after a report in later October warned of weak profits.

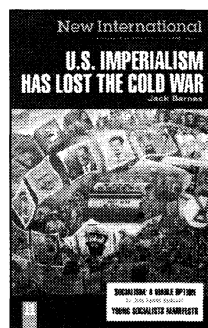
Sooner or later, some of the weaker European imperialist governments will have to leave the euro as they prove unable to implement the fiscal policies needed to be in it. The rulers of Germany are leery about Greece joining soon because they know in the end they have to foot the bill for the weak spots in the euro. In the wake of the September referendum in Denmark, in which voters firmly rejected the euro, the European capitalist governments that from a position of relative strength have not joined the euro—the United Kingdom and Sweden—are now postponing a decision on it. The declining currency is certainly not attractive to them.

The euro cannot replace the U.S. dollar as a world currency, but European capitalists will try to rival it. A sharp drop in the U.S. stock markets or a slowdown in economic growth in the United States would hurt the dollar, and capitalists in Europe would try to take advantage of that to strengthen the euro. Fears that more oil-producing nations will join Iraq in demanding payments in euros rather than dollars can set off movements in jittery currency markets.

As the *International Herald Tribune* reported in late October, “Some economists note parallels between the euro's decline and the fall of European currencies against the dollar in the early and mid-1980s. That shift led the U.S. current-account deficit to balloon, they note, creating tensions between Washington and European capitals that contributed to the global stock market crash in 1987.”

*Carl-Erik Isacsson is a member of the metal workers union in Södertälje, Sweden.*

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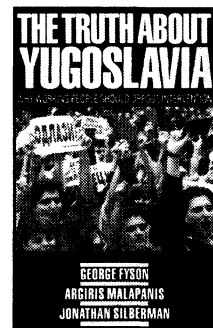
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# Bipartisan framework of capitalist politics

Printed below are excerpts from “So Far from God, So Close to Orange County: The Deflationary Drag of Finance Capital,” a talk presented by SWP national secretary Jack Barnes at a socialist educational conference held in Los Angeles over the 1994-95 New Year’s weekend. The entire presentation can be found in *Capitalism’s World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium*. Copyright © 1999 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.

## BY JACK BARNES

How is the pattern of world politics we have been discussing reflected concretely in the class struggle in the United States today? What do workers and youth in this country confront, and what can we do about it?

Right after the 1992 presidential elections, a public meeting was organized in New York City in conjunction with a conference of the Socialist Workers Party’s National Committee and communist leaders from several other countries. At that public meeting, we said that what was most important about the bourgeoisie’s election campaign was the fact that it was not going to end with the counting of the ballots. “America First,” the “culture war,” building a wall along the border with Mexico—the themes of the ultrarightist Republican primary candidate Patrick Buchanan—continued to resound.

The campaign of Ross Perot—who ended up getting 19 percent of the popular vote—and his demagogic appeal to an insecure middle class was not a fleeting phenomenon in bourgeois politics, irrespective of Perot himself. In the course of the 1992 campaign, Clinton had already begun speaking Perot’s language, probing measures to erode the social wage won through the labor struggles of the 1930s and civil rights battles of the 1950s and 1960s. The Democratic nominee campaigned on the pledge to “end welfare as we know it.”

## Coarsening rhetoric

Across the bourgeois political spectrum, this coarsening rhetoric—aimed at heightening resentment in the middle classes and undercutting social solidarity among working people—continued after the election, as we said it would. Two years into the Clinton presidency and two months after the election of a Republican majority in the U.S. Congress, an ideological battle still rages within the bourgeoisie, packaged in demagoguery directed to the broader population.

How should the capitalists operate politically in this new period of economic crisis and growing instability? Why are the employers still so far from accomplishing what they need to do, even after more than a decade of assaults on real wages, employment levels, job conditions, and working hours? How can they break through obstacles to take qualitatively more? How can the bourgeoisie start marshaling arguments that will enable them—even if ever so cautiously at first—to chip away more significantly at the assumptions underlying Social Security itself? These are among the questions at the center of bourgeois politics in the United States today.

The bipartisan framework of bourgeois politics continues to move to the right. What is the net result, for example, of a Demo-

cratic president coming into office and pledging to do something about national health care? Two years later, working people are further away from the socialization of medical coverage than before—*further away*. That is the reality. But the same direction is true across the board. There is a bipartisan movement to the right—and in some important respects a convergence—in the economic and social legislative agendas of both bourgeois parties.

Advancing along this trajectory inevitably breeds rightist demagoguery, because the efforts by the Democratic and Republican politicians to rationalize their policies end up feeding reactionary biases, fears, and resentments. No matter how particular politicians try to package their anti-working-class moves, it is rightist views that are given the biggest impulse by the fact of these moves itself...

Capitalism over the past couple of decades has at least doubled the official jobless rate that is considered “natural” in the United States, Europe, and most other imperialist countries. The numbers of workers no longer even counted as part of the labor force still continues to grow. At the same time, the capitalists have reduced unemployment benefits, held down the minimum wage, diminished the buying power of take-home pay, denied government funding for child care, and allowed welfare benefits to fall further and further behind price increases. Working people are being driven out of affordable housing, and medical and retirement benefits are being cut.

This is what capitalism is imposing on growing numbers in the working class today. And then politicians from both parties start branding those forced to live under these conditions as outlaws. They start talking about putting the children of the “underclass” into orphanages. They start denying workers unemployment benefits or welfare unless we accept jobs at a minimum or subminimum wage. They draw immigrants across the border to exploit cheap labor and then begin organizing to deny them schooling, medical care, and social benefits....

During the 1992 U.S. presidential campaign, the bourgeoisie’s two-party setup already began to show its tendency to disintegrate around the edges under the pressures we have been describing. And this process will continue. The first manifestations will not necessarily be recognizably fascist. Perot, for instance, is a Bonapartist dema-

agogue who presses a generally right-wing political agenda, but his movement does not have the incipient fascist thrust of what Buchanan is trying to put together.

Whether it is Perot, Buchanan, or other figures and currents that carve out a niche in bourgeois politics, their initial target will not be to take the labor movement head on, or to go after revolutionary-minded workers and communists. In fact, many will demagogically speak on behalf of “the ordinary working man.” Right now the ultrarightists are largely going after the Clinton administration, as well as those in their own milieu soft on these “New Deal-influenced” “globalist elites.” They rail against those who are selling out “America” and “American workers.” They condemn the “corrupt and decadent pretenders” to leadership of the nation among the spokespeople of the existing bourgeois parties, government institutions, and federal bureaucracy.

This is how political radicalization begins, as evidence of political weakness and moral bankruptcy mount in capitalist politics. And we should remember that forces coming from different directions in bourgeois politics can and do converge around radical demagoguery of this kind. Buchanan and Perot, for example, converge with those such as the so-called consumer advocate Ralph Nader and *Nation* columnist Alexander Cockburn to rail against the North American Free Trade Agreement—all of them speaking more or less openly in “America First” terms, while shedding crocodile tears over the conditions of Mexican workers and farmers....

## ‘More of a one party system’

Today, bourgeois politics in the United States is more of a one-party system than it has ever been in the lifetime of anyone in this hall. Not just in foreign policy, where the rulers have followed a bipartisan strategic course since the end of World War I, but in domestic economic and social policy as well.

I do not mean to exaggerate—the two-party face of the one-party system remains decisive for the bourgeoisie in fooling working people, and there is an extreme right wing within capitalist politics that shows substantial strength at each new turning point. But on defense of the dollar; on preparing for economic war against U.S. capital’s competitors; on cutting back social spending; on laying the basis to erode the social wage and limit universal entitle-

ments; on “reviewing” and where necessary reversing affirmative action; on strengthening repressive legislation and the cops, including the border cops; on weakening the power of the unions to resist—on all these fundamental questions there is a common direction, regardless of the different voices in which Clinton and Gingrich speak.

I was struck in this regard by the speech Gingrich gave at the beginning of December to a gathering of Republicans in Congress, accepting their nomination as Speaker of the House. “If you truly love democracy and you truly believe in representative self-government, you can never study Franklin Delano Roosevelt too much,” he said. “He did bring us out of the Depression. He did lead the Allied movement in World War II. In many ways he created the modern world. He was clearly, I think, as a political leader the greatest figure of the 20th century,” Gingrich said.

“[A]nd if you go back and read the New Deal, they tried again and again. They didn’t always get it right, and we would have voted against much of it, but the truth is we would have voted for much of it.”

Then Gingrich turned to Winston Churchill, who, he sermonized, “in 1940 in the darkest and grimmest days said, ‘I have nothing to offer but blood, sweat, toil and tears.’”

Roosevelt and Churchill. The two most prominent Allied war leaders during the second world imperialist slaughter. Both of them often portrayed as decisive individuals who in abnormal times stood above normal government functioning and got things done. That is who Gingrich offered up as models.

It is not that the Republicans are setting the line in Washington. It is that under today’s crisis conditions, a bipartisan imperialist political lodestar keeps being followed to the right. And the initiative increasingly comes from those who claim to speak directly to the American people, over and above workaday partisan politics. More and more of the initiative comes from those politicians who say the people must be mobilized against all those who have lost touch with the average American—against the insiders, against the elites, against the bureaucrats, against the politicians!

It makes no difference that their proposals are sheer demagoguery. It is such voices within bourgeois politics that have held the initiative since the 1992 election and continue to do so today.

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### CANADA

#### Vancouver

“A Voice for Fighting Workers” Speaker: Derrick O’Keefe, Communist League candidate in Vancouver South-Burnaby. Sat., Nov. 25, 7:00 p.m. 4806 Main Street. Donation: \$5. Tel: 604-872-8343

### NEW ZEALAND

#### Christchurch

“Socialism: Utopian and Scientific.” A discussion on this classic work of Marxism by Frederick Engels. Sat., Nov. 25, 7:00 p.m. Gloucester Arcade, 129 Gloucester St. Donation: \$3. Tel: 365-6055.



**'Borrowing while Black'**—A class-action suit is being launched against Ford Motor Credit Co. for hitting Black car buyers with higher financing rates.



Harry Ring

**Don't get lost in northeast Pennsylvania**—Apparently without much to do, cops in this area enforce "no cruising" signs. For instance: "No cruising 3 times past

this point within 1 hour or 6 times past this sign within 3 hours between 8 p.m. and 3 a.m. Monday through Sunday." One area worker who allegedly violated the notice got a \$230 fine.

**For Mental Health Day**—Check out "Death Row Marv."—a \$24 action doll portraying a death in an electric chair. "Feel the burn as the electric buzz fills the room and he starts to shake and convulse," declares an ad.

**Reasonable question**—"As long as the United States gives several billion dollars annually to Israeli's armed forces, but makes Palestinian teens buy their own rocks, how can President Bill

Clinton pose as a neutral peacemaker?—Letter to Montreal *Gazette*.

**Wheels of 'justice' chew slow**—A New Jersey lawyer went into federal court charging the state parole board was unresponsive to his request to discuss breaking the parole applications logjam. Officials declared, "Not so." Currently, more than 3,400 applications are awaiting review.

**Let there be light**—A trial is under way in Melbourne, Florida, to win the right of female high schoolers to have the same rights as male students. The suit began with a demand for lights on the young women's softball field, as it

is on the one for young men. The ACLU is pressing to include other area schools in the suit.

**Things we worry about**—The *Los Angeles Times* offers a weekly column on "learning how to succeed in personal finances." A recent one had us, and the *Times*, in a sweat. A young couple divides their time on the east and west coast with a house in L.A. and a Manhattan apartment. He's a successful photographer and she cooks for well-heeled folks on both coasts. Together, they knock down \$290,000 a year. But the only insurance they carry is medical. (We confess, we didn't read on to find out why.)

**Between rock and hard place**—

Doctors in England were urged to closely scrutinize Zyban. It's said to curb such smoking withdrawal symptoms as irritability and restlessness. It was widely touted when it went on the market last summer, but reports are coming in from users of insomnia, sweating, tremors, and other side effects.

**Lean back and breathe shallow**—Fix-up jobs were ordered on 31 British Aerospace planes used by Quantas and Ansett airlines in Australia. At least five of the planes were affected by engine oil fumes leaking into the cockpits and cabins. Crew and passengers reported they suffered headaches, vomiting, breathing difficulties and loss of consciousness.

## Anarchism vs. the revolutionary fight for state power

Printed below are excerpts from the writings of Frederick Engels on anarchism, a petty-bourgeois current against which Engels and Karl Marx, founders of the modern communist movement, waged a political struggle within the working-class movement in the 1860s and 1870s.

The main anarchist grouping at the time was headed by Russian radical Mikhail Bakunin. They preached that the state, not capitalism, was the problem facing working people. Workers should abstain from political activity and instead declare a general strike to wait for the old regime to collapse. The Bakuninists posited as "anti-authoritarian" while in reality "constitut[ing] themselves as a secret society with a hierarchical organization, and under . . . [an] absolutely dictatorial leadership" directed by Bakunin himself, Engels explained.

The first and the third items reprinted below can be found in Marx and Engels's *Selected Works*, volume 2, and the second piece in their *Selected Correspondence*, both published by Progress Publishers.

### BY FREDERICK ENGELS

("Apropos of Working-Class Political Action," a reporter's record of a speech delivered on Sept. 21, 1871, at the London conference of the International Workingmen's Association.)

Complete abstention from political action is impossible. The abstentionist press participates in politics every day. It is only a question of how one does it and of what politics one engages in. For the rest, to us abstention is impossible. The working-class party functions as a political party in most countries, by now, and it is not for us to ruin it by preaching abstention. Living experience, the political oppression of the existing governments compels the workers to occupy themselves with politics whether they like it or not, be it for political or for social goals. To preach abstention to them is to throw them into the embrace of bourgeois politics. The morning after the Paris Commune, which has made proletarian political action an order of the day, abstention is entirely out of the question.

We want the abolition of classes. What is the means of achieving it? The only means is political domination of the proletariat. For all this, now that it is acknowledged by one and all, we are told not to meddle with politics! The abstentionists say they are revolutionaries, even revolutionaries *par excellence*. Yet revolution is a supreme political act and those who want revolution must also want the means of achieving it, that is, political action, which prepares the ground for revolution and provides the workers with the revolutionary training without which they are sure to become the dupes of the Favres and Pyats the morning after the battle. However, our politics must be working-class politics. The workers' party must never be the tagtail of any bourgeois party; it must be independent and have its goal and its own policy.

The political freedoms, the right of assembly and association, and the freedom of the press—those are our weapons. Are we to sit back and abstain while somebody tries to rob us of them? It is said that a political act on our part implies that we accept the existing state of affairs. On the contrary, so long as this state of affairs offers us the means of protesting against it, our use of these means does not signify that we recognize the prevailing order.

(From a letter to T. Cuno in Milan, Italy, Jan. 24, 1872.)

Bakunin has a peculiar theory of his own, a medley of Proudhonism and communism. The chief point concerning the former is that it does not regard capital i.e., the class antagonism between capitalists and wage workers which has arisen through social development, but the *state* as the main evil to be abolished.

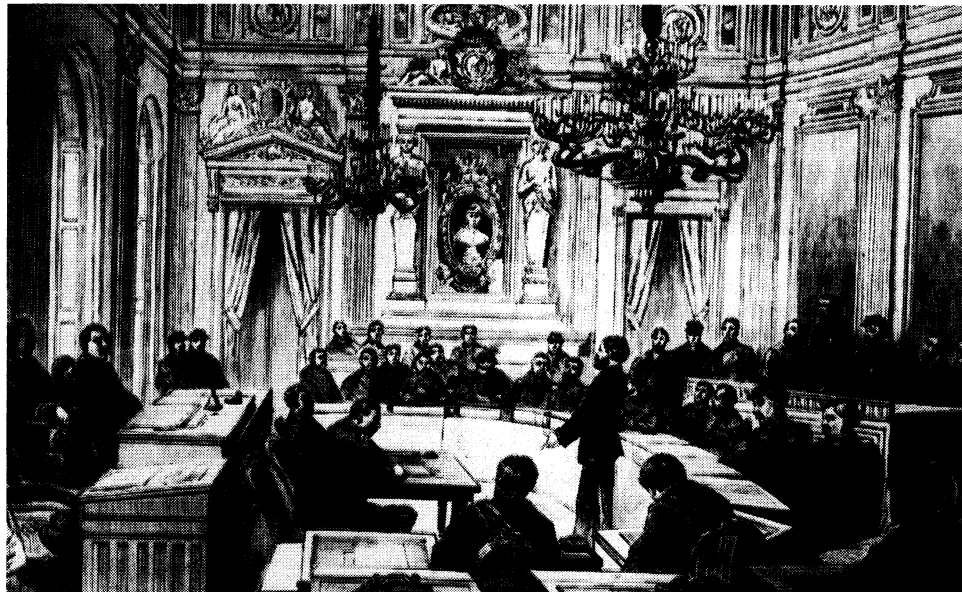
While the great mass of the Social-Democratic workers are of the same opinion as we i.e., that state power is nothing more than the organization which the ruling classes—landowners and capitalists—have provided for themselves in order to protect their social privileges, Bakunin maintains that it is the *state* which has created capital, that the capitalist has his capital *only by the grace of the state*. As, therefore, the state is the chief evil, it is above all the state which must be done away with and then capitalism will go to blazes of itself. We, on the contrary, say: Do away with capital, the concentration of all means of production in the hands of the few, and the state will fall of itself. The difference is an essential one: Without a previous social revolution the abolition of the state is nonsense; the abolition of capital is precisely the social revolution and involves a change in the whole mode of production.

But since for Bakunin the state is the main evil, nothing must be done which can keep the state—that is, any state, whether it be a republic, a monarchy, or anything else—alive. Hence *complete abstention from all politics*. To commit a political act, especially to take part in an election, would be a betrayal of principle. The thing to do is to carry on propaganda, heap abuse upon the state, organize and when *all* the workers, hence the majority, are won over, all the authorities are to be deposed, the state abolished and replaced with the organization of the International. This great act with which the millennium begins, is called *social liquidation*.

All this sounds extremely radical and is so simple that it can be learnt by heart in five minutes; that is why the Bakuninist theory has speedily found favor also in Italy and Spain among young lawyers, doctors, and other doctrinaires. But the mass of the workers will never allow itself to be persuaded that the public affairs of their countries are not also their own affairs; they are naturally *politically-minded* and whoever tries to make them believe that they should leave politics alone will in the end be dropped by them. To preach to the workers that they should in all circumstances abstain from politics is to drive them into the arms of the priests or the bourgeois republicans.

(From "On Authority," an article published in December 1873.)

Why do the anti-authoritarians not confine themselves to crying out against political authority, the state? All Socialists are agreed that the political state, and with it political authority, will disappear as a result of the coming social revolution, that is, that public functions will lose their political character and be transformed into the simple administrative functions of watching over the true interests of society. But the anti-authoritarians demand that the authoritarian political state be abolished at one stroke, even before the social conditions that gave birth to it have been destroyed. They demand that the first act of the social revolution shall be the abolition of authority. Have these



Meeting of Paris Commune, the first workers government, which held power from March to May 1871 before being overthrown by French bourgeoisie. Anarchist Bakunin viewed "the state as the main evil to be abolished," Engels said. But working people must first establish their class rule by taking and wielding state power, Marx and Engels argued.

gentlemen ever seen a revolution? A revolution is certainly the most authoritarian thing there is; it is the act whereby one part of the population imposes its will upon the other part by means of rifles, bayonets, and cannon—authoritarian means, if such there be at all; and if the victorious party does not want to have fought in vain, it must maintain this rule by means of the terror which its arms inspire in the reactionaries. Would the Paris Commune have lasted a single day

if it had not made use of this authority of the armed people against the bourgeois? Should we not, on the contrary, reproach it for not having used it freely enough?

Therefore, either one of two things: either the anti-authoritarians don't know what they are talking about, in which case they are creating nothing but confusion; or they do know, and in that case they are betraying the movement of the proletariat. In either case they serve the reaction.

## —25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—

25 CENTS  
**THE MILITANT**  
A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY/PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

November 28, 1975

You may be a worker on strike in an arms factory, a reporter uncovering illegal government activities, or a member of a socialist organization. Under the new crime "reform" bill now before Congress, S. 1, you could be thrown in jail.

You might even be executed, if a jury found you guilty of "treason," "espionage," or "sabotage."

S. 1, officially known as the "Criminal Justice Reform Act of 1975," has prompted an outpouring of opposition from trade unions, civil liberties groups, and civil rights organizations.

"The bill's alleged purpose is to revise and reform the United States Criminal Code," notes the American Civil Liberties Union pamphlet *Stop S. 1*, "but the real purpose of important parts of the bill is to perpetuate secrecy and stifle protest."

Indeed, S. 1 is the capitalists' answer to Watergate—not a bill to curb government violations of democratic rights, but a bill to intimidate future Daniel Ellsbergs, silence antiwar GIs, break up demonstrations against government policy, and prevent dissidents from expressing their views.

The bill's authors, have even dusted off old witch-hunting legislation, such as the Smith Act, and included it in S. 1, despite the fact that provisions in these laws have been ruled unconstitutional.

**THE MILITANT**  
PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE  
NEW YORK, N.Y. FIVE (5) CENTS

November 27, 1950

Why were so many CIO-endorsed candidates defeated on Nov. 7? Why did organized labor's worst enemies, like Taft, score overwhelming victories? Why has the CIO suffered a one-third drop in membership? How can the CIO effectively combat the coming anti-labor offensive and intensified witch-hunt of the new Congress?

These are the burning questions that faced the 600 delegates to the 12th CIO national convention, which began on Nov. 20 in Chicago. But all the evidence of the first two days of the convention indicates that the CIO leaders are determined to evade or ignore these questions.

CIO President Philip Murray's published report and his keynote address, the resolutions brought out by the Resolutions Committee headed by United Auto Workers President Walter Reuther and the apathetic discussion have already revealed that these leaders are concerned only with covering up for false policies silencing criticism, and shifting blame.

Above all, they give every indication of their intentions to continue their same blind and dangerous course. This is evidenced most strikingly in their attitude toward the question that is uppermost in every active, thinking unionist's mind: What road should labor take in politics after the disastrous setback of its policies in the past elections?

# World solidarity meeting held in Havana

Continued from front page  
cussions, and an expansion of popular education.

## Political highlights

Speeches by three leaders of the Cuban revolutionary government were the feature of the first two days of the conference. Each one was followed by an extended question-and-answer period. Greetings from numerous delegations have also been heard.

Carlos Lage, secretary of the Executive Committee of the Council of Ministers, took up questions that have been discussed informally by many delegates concerning the economic measures taken in the 1990s to confront the economic crisis.

He pointed to gains made in the six years since the 1994 conference. Unemployment dropped last year from 8 percent to 6 percent. Productivity and job conditions have improved, with production nationwide growing an average of 4.4 percent a year since 1995. Food supplies are more ample and nutrition is noticeably better. Instead of extended, daily interruptions in electric power, such blackouts are now only infrequent.

Foreign capital has been used to improve the productivity of some important Cuban export industries such as nickel. But this and other measures, such as setting up farmers' markets and legalizing the private holding of dollars, Lage explained, are not aimed at restoring some kind of capitalism.

"These are unavoidable measures taken in new circumstances to make it possible to continue defending the revolution, to continue defending socialism," he said. "Ours is not and never has been a privatization process."

"We are not trying to establish a market economy, and we will never subordinate our revolution to the market."

Lage pointed to many difficulties impeding production. In addition to the economic war being waged by Washington, including the obstacles to getting long-term low-interest loans, the price of the oil Cuba imports has tripled since 1998, while the price of Cuba's chief export, sugar, has dropped below 5 cents a pound, substantially less than production costs. "That correlation could not be worse."

Daily life remains hard, Lage insisted. While food shortages have eased, thanks to the enormous efforts made to encourage production and improve distribution, prices are high and very damaging shortages remain in such vital areas as transportation and medicine.

During the discussion, when a delegate observed that Cuba is paying a "high political price" for the inequalities brought about by the legalization of dollar holdings in 1994, Lage said he agreed.

Many Cubans with family members living abroad receive dollars, as do those working in the tourist sector and a number of other jobs. This has brought in much-needed hard currency, which has been used by the state as foreign exchange to purchase imported goods essential to such basic necessities as education and health care. At the

## 200 Pathfinder books sold during discussion at meeting

Nearly \$2,000 in Pathfinder books and pamphlets, plus a dozen subscriptions to the *Militant* and its sister publication in Spanish, *Perspectiva Mundial*, were sold from a booth that was a lively center for discussion during the Second World Conference of Friendship and Solidarity with Cuba.

The bestseller was *Che Guevara Talks to Young People*, with 13 copies sold in English and 11 in Spanish. Two titles by Jack Barnes, *Capitalism's World Disorder* and *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning*, were also among the most popular, with 13 and 19 copies sold, respectively.

In addition, conference participants bought 29 copies of the Marxist magazine *New Internationalist* in various languages. Eleven of them were of the issue featuring "U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War."

All told, more than 200 books and pamphlets were sold.



Granma/Ahmed Velázquez

## Speeches by several Cuban revolutionary leaders were highlights of the solidarity conference in Havana

same time the great variations in the access Cubans have to dollars—if any—has greatly increased economic and social inequalities, which are much larger now than in the decades before 1990. Legalization of holding dollars has also brought income—rents, profits, interest—that, as Lage put it, is not "the fruit of work."

He pointed to measures taken to lessen the inequalities—a recent 40 percent pay increase for workers in education and health care and the continued investment in programs that benefit everyone. Part of the social wage in Cuba includes medical care for all, government-financed education—including university and postgraduate study—and a food ration made available to every Cuban at a cost well below the market prices.

Even in the most difficult period of the economic crisis of the last years, Lage said, the revolution always shared what was available as equitably as possible. The bedrock policy of the revolutionary Cuban government has been and remains that "no one is left to fend for themselves," he said. Not a single hospital or school has been closed, despite the shortages of medicines and school supplies.

He emphasized that Cuba's ability to survive, and now to slowly move forward again, has been the result of the mobilization and spirit of resistance of the Cuban people. He pointed to the importance of the workers' parliaments in the factories, and discussions in the trade unions and in every workplace, which have enabled workers to participate in making decisions about the measures to be taken.

"What our people are showing, and what I would tell you, is that our revolution today is stronger, not only because we are doing better economically, but because we have been reaffirming the basic principles of the revolution," Lage concluded.

## 40 years of Yankee aggression

Ricardo Alarcón, president of the National Assembly of People's Power, outlined for conference participants the 40 years of economic, political, and military aggression waged by the U.S. government against the revolution.

He underlined the consistency of the policies implemented by successive administrations aimed at getting rid of the Cuban revolution and its example. From the first military attacks organized and financed by Washington in response to Cuba's sweeping land reform of 1959, to the most recent U.S. economic measures contained as riders in the agricultural appropriations bill signed into law a few weeks ago, U.S. policy has had only one goal—to overthrow the Cuban revolution.

During the discussion a British delegate raised the possibility that the U.S. government would soon end the prohibitions on trade and investment "because the policy has

failed" and public opinion has turned against it. Alarcón replied that the economic warfare is being intensified. He cited the Torricelli act passed in 1992 and the Helms-Burton law in 1996 to illustrate the continuity and consistency of Washington's policy toward Cuba, including the 40-year policy of helping to organize and finance counter-revolutionary Cuban organizations inside and outside Cuba.

Referring to the agricultural bill recently signed into law by U.S. president Clinton, which some claim eases restrictions on the sale of food and medicine to Cuba, Alarcón noted that part of the war is to sow confusion. "In order to hide their crimes, they try to make us think they are changing their policy, when in fact they are not."

Alarcón stressed that the revolution itself is the target: "Most important is that a revolutionary power is in place, in the hands of the proletariat, a fighting proletariat."

Responding to a delegate asking how the U.S. presidential elections will affect Cuba, Alarcón said that regardless of who wins, the economic warfare on Cuba will continue. The identity of the new administration "will not make the slightest difference."

Giving the example of how African-Americans and their supporters won political and social rights through struggle, he said, "The ones who can force the U.S. government to change things are the people of the United States."

In answer to a question by a supporter of Puerto Rican independence, Alarcón reminded the delegates that in the 1980s the U.S. government demanded that Cuba cease championing Puerto Rican independence in the United Nations, making that a condition for lifting the economic embargo. "As long as there is a single Puerto Rican who fights for independence, we will support them," he declared, to a standing ovation.

"Anyone who is struggling anywhere in the world to secure a better future can count on Cuba's solidarity," he added.

## UN vote

The day the conference opened, the Cuban newspaper *Granma* headlined the November 9 vote in the United Nations General Assembly in favor of a resolution demanding an end to Washington's economic embargo against Cuba, with 167 votes in favor, 3 votes against (United States, Israel, and the Marshall Islands) and 4 abstentions (El Salvador, Latvia, Morocco, and Nicaragua).

Felipe Pérez Roque, Cuba's foreign minister, reported to the conference on this resolution, as well as on a resolution in favor of Puerto Rico's independence, introduced by Cuba, which was also adopted.

"I have lived under a blockade all my life," Pérez Roque noted. "Decades have gone by, and none of the attacks have ever brought us to heel," he said. "The attempt

to isolate Cuba has failed." Cuba will never surrender, he said.

## Workshops

Following the opening sessions, delegates began a day and a half of workshop discussions on three topics—the economic blockade, exchanging experiences in solidarity work, and spreading information on Cuba. Participants will also visit a number of places of interest, including a psychiatric hospital and the medical school where students from Latin America are studying free of charge.

In the opening days of discussion, delegates from the Bahamas, Honduras, Ecuador, South Africa, and other countries to which Cuba has sent doctors have emphasized the impact of this aspect of the internationalism of the Cuban revolution.

Approximately 600 delegates to the conference are from the United States. Other countries with large delegations include Mexico, Canada, Brazil, Puerto Rico, Italy, South Africa, the United Kingdom, and India.

Jacob Perasso contributed to this article.

# Elections

## Continued from Page 7

being against increasingly harsh conditions can value not only the immediate outcome of their struggles but the fact that it will weigh in the balance down the road as well.

A small but growing number are reading, studying, and helping to distribute Pathfinder books, the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*, and *New Internationalist*. As these battles sharpen, millions begin to see the stakes in battles today for the future and want a scientific understanding of the class struggle, the truth about the world in which they live, and clear working-class answers to the barrage of lies and half-truths that surround them in bourgeois society. Every step in this direction is the counterpart by working people to what the capitalist class is preparing for as well.

It bodes well for the possibility of the front ranks of militant workers and farmers forging links with one another—both within the United States and around the world—and strengthening their mutual struggles in defense of their wages, working conditions, and dignity.

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**THE MILITANT**  
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# Tomato workers in Arizona gain first UFCW contract

Continued from front page

work after an authorized absence.

"Now we are going to have respect for everyone," Gutiérrez said. "No one will be fired for no reason."

The contract states that the company may continue to use prisoners from Fort Grant state prison as tomato pickers not represented by the union.

After a nine-month organizing drive, tomato workers at Eurofresh won the right to vote for a union. On July 20 they voted 116 to 70 for representation by UFCW Local 99. At the time, elated workers chanted "*Ganamos! Ganamos!*" (We won) in response to this victory.

## November 12 walkout

Some 350 tomato workers walked out of the hothouses of Dutch-owned Eurofresh on Nov. 12, 1999. The strike was triggered by the company issuing a new pay structure that would have doubled the amount of work for the same pay. Workers' dissatisfaction had been simmering long before the walkout. The mostly Mexican workforce balked at the bosses' insulting treatment of them, and opposed the abysmal sanitary and safety conditions.

Shortly after they walked out, workers decided to join a union. Jesús García, a leader of the fight, said, "We were tired of the poor conditions. They treated us like burros, like stupids." He added, "We knew nothing about unions. We called all the unions in the telephone book and the UFCW was the first to come help us organize."

The tomato workers stayed out for two weeks. They returned to work with more than 300 UFCW union cards signed. This was only the beginning of the nine-month struggle for union representation. Rito Gutiérrez and Jesús García led an in-plant organizing committee, which had discussions with every worker in the plant to consolidate support for the union fight.

Before the election, members of the organizing committee went door-to-door to co-workers' homes as the company's anti-union propaganda intensified. Pro-union workers rallied outside the plant with signs declaring "*Si se puede, UFCW*" (Yes we can, UFCW). Two days before the vote, 200 workers showed up at a union rally.

The union victory took the Eurofresh to-

mato workers on the road to becoming the first group of farm workers to be represented by an Arizona union contract in more than 30 years. There are 56,000 agricultural workers in Arizona in a \$6.3 billion industry.

In 1972, an Agricultural Employment Relations Act was passed in Arizona, establishing an Agricultural Employer Relations Board that regulates efforts by farm workers to organize in the state.

When workers began their efforts to be represented by the UFCW, Eurofresh hired attorney Michael Saqui of Fresno, California, to keep the union out. Saqui filed several unfair labor practice complaints against the UFCW before the vote, and the board disqualified 150 workers from voting, ruling that they were not agricultural workers. This ruling, along with firings by the company, reduced the number of workers involved from the original 350 who walked out to the 186 that voted.

On August 26, about 70 tomato workers, relatives, and supporters gathered at the Willcox Community Center to celebrate their union election and solidify their determination to win a contract from a company that had publicized its opposition to accepting a union contract. Local 99 president William McDonnell welcomed the workers to the statewide local, which has about 21,000 members.

In this rural town a couple of hours east



Tomato workers in Willcox, Arizona, who have won a union contract at Eurofresh, Inc.

of Tucson, Dutch-owned Eurofresh owns a vast expanse of tomato nurseries, row on row of hothouses. The company is expanding. It has recently contracted more than 200 additional workers from Mexico—many of whom are Mixtec or other indigenous nationalities—hoping they could easily be convinced to oppose the union. At least three of these new workers were at the August 26 celebration. One of them, a 15-year-old Mixtec youth from the state of Guerrero, said he thought that in time many more would support the union.

Cecilia Quijada, a packer who has worked at Eurofresh for almost four years, said winning union recognition means

"workers won't be abused like we used to be." She said her message to workers elsewhere who are considering a fight for a union is, "Don't be afraid. If you're afraid, you can't win."

For three months the UFCW negotiated with Eurofresh for a contract. On November 3 the Agricultural Employee Relations Board dismissed all charges against the union, certified it, and the company and the union negotiators agreed on a tentative three-year pact.

Six days later, eligible tomato workers ratified the contract by a 98-2 vote. Crop workers, pickers, roof washers, and housekeepers are covered by the agreement.

## Steelworkers in Minnesota end six-week strike

BY BECKY ELLIS

ANOKA, Minnesota—Some 350 members of United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 15199 returned to work October 24, ending a six-week strike against IMI Cornelius in this Minneapolis suburb. Heath-care benefits and a two-tier wage system were the main issues in the strike, which led strikers to turn down two contract proposals. Cornelius, an arm of United Kingdom IMI PLC, manufactures machines that make soft drinks.

Over the course of the last contract, monthly premiums for family health-care coverage went from \$70 to \$294—equivalent to a pay cut of about \$1.40 an hour. During the same time, the average wage increased by only \$1.10 an hour.

Becky Dinnetz, an assembler at the plant who has four children she raises alone, told the St. Paul *Pioneer Press* she has gone without health insurance because she can't afford the premiums. Before the strike her job paid \$10.62 an hour. She said she recently qualified for Minnesota Care, a state-subsidized health-care program for lower income workers.

Under the old contract, the company paid for part of the workers' health insurance premiums, but increases were capped at 6 percent a year. The union demanded the company remove or raise the cap.

Under the two-tier system adopted in the 1980s, new hires made between 60 cents and \$1.70 less than other workers doing the same job.

Cornelius's first contract offer narrowed the gap in the two-tier system and increased the company's contributions to the medical premiums, but with a cap. That proposal was turned down by a 3 to 1 margin. A second contract, approved by the union's negotiat-

ing committee, was turned down October 8 by a 230-87 vote.

About 150 workers and supporters, mostly from other USWA locals, rallied October 14 in support of the strike.

The contract finally approved, by a 2 to 1 vote, improves medical coverage and reduces the two-tier wage gap. Insurance premiums are lowered, although at the cost of higher co-payments for doctors' visits and prescriptions. Monthly premiums fall to

\$238 for the rest of this year and \$240 for next year.

The company's contribution will be capped at a certain amount if premiums rise exponentially.

Workers hired after the two-tier system was implemented will get an extra 15 cents per hour in the first and second years of the contract. All workers will get raises of at least 40 cents per hour in each year of the contract.

## Minneapolis protesters demand justice in cop killing of Black man

BY RAMONA BLACK

MINNEAPOLIS—About 150 people rallied in front of city hall here November 8 to protest the police killing of Alfred Sanders, a 29-year-old Black man.

Sanders was shot more than 33 times by five cops, who blocked his car in an alley with their patrol cars after following him, and then fired at him. They now justify their action by claiming he tried to run them over. Sanders, who was unarmed, had done nothing out of the ordinary other than "drive erratically," according to the cops. Sanders, 29, was mentally ill.

"You don't shoot an animal that many times," said Ken Warren, Sanders's oldest brother. "They don't shoot, stop and shoot again. They were shooting to kill. You can't justify this. My brother never did anything." Photographs of Sanders's body taken by the family and displayed at the rally showed at least a dozen bullet wounds.

Sanders is the third mentally ill person shot by police this year. Minneapolis police chief

Robert Olson said the shooting and number of shots were justified because Sanders "put a lot of people in danger today."

At the protest, organized by friends and family of Sanders, demonstrators chanted, "No justice, no peace, prosecute the police," and shouted, "Who's next?"

"We want to fully prosecute," said Shewan McDearmon, Sanders's cousin. He said the family is also demanding an independent investigation and wants the cops and media to stop trying to defame Sanders as a violent, dangerous man.

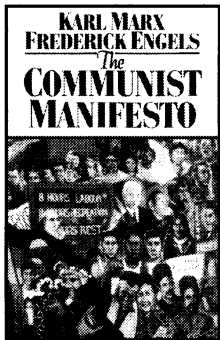
"He was never the type of person to raise his hand," McDearmon said. "He was a strong, proud, loving man who always stood up for his community," said Leslie Draine, a close friend.

Another rally to demand prosecution of the cops who killed Sanders is planned for November 18.

Ramona Black is a meat packer in St. Paul, Minnesota.

## The Communist Manifesto

Karl Marx, Frederick Engels



Founding document of the modern working-class movement, published in 1848. Explains why communists act on the basis not of preconceived principles but of facts springing from the actual class struggle, and why communism, to the de-

gree it is a theory, is the generalization of the historical line of march of the working class and of the political conditions for its liberation. Also available in Spanish. \$3.95

See page 12 for distributors

## LETTERS

### Fight for black lung benefits

I'm writing to express my feelings about federal black lung benefits. When you open your case, the battle has just begun because the Department of Labor will do whatever it can to knock you out of your benefits.

Their attorneys will send you to their doctors, who will give you nothing. That is why they send you to them. I think this matter is very wrong and dishonest. Everyone

knows that no doctor knows you better than your family physician, who you see regularly.

These doctors don't know your previous work history. Nevertheless if you do happen to win black lung benefits, the appeals board will step in and appeal the decision. In my opinion this is wrong because it just costs more money that should go towards funding coal miners' benefits.

The reason I feel this way is because three days before the hearing

on my black lung case, the Department of Labor called and requested that I go to their doctor. But just luckily I had a letter saying that all medical reports on my condition must be in 20 days before the hearing.

I think the system stinks, because our coal miners are the backbone of our country. I think some of our lawmakers should wake up and go into the coalfields where the coal dust really exists, and not just look at some picture in a book Then they

should think twice about making the laws, because you don't breathe in coal dust from a picture in a book.

I have been in several homes where an old coal miner has to sit up in his bed to breathe and still can't get his benefits. I think this is a shame. After laboring so many hard years underground to support his family, he now has to suffer the rest of his life. He should receive his black lung benefits.

I hope some of our leaders can do something to help our coal miners. Den Hunter  
Harold, Kentucky

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people.

Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

## UK farmers, truckers call for fuel tax cut

BY TONY HUNT

LONDON—"Cut Fuel Tax Now" was the message emblazoned on the front of the leading truck in a five-vehicle convoy through central London November 14. The convoy, which included a farm vehicle, and had apparently evaded the police, was greeted enthusiastically by a rally in Hyde Park of 1,500 farmers, truckers, and supporters from England and Wales.

Organized by the People's Fuel Lobby (PFL), the action demanded government relief from the high price of fuel. Combined with other rising costs and a slump in prices, many farmers and independent owner-operators are being driven into bankruptcy.

"This is about peoples' lives and peoples' livings," protest leader Andrew Spence told the crowd. "We will not go away. We will fight this government and the next government until they do something about fuel duty." A cut in fuel tax has been the main demand of this and earlier actions across the country.

Spence, who owns a small trucking business, led a four-day convoy of 70 trucks and cars from Newcastle in the northeast of England to London. The convoy was subjected to police intimidation and harassment, and a hostile media campaign that sought to minimize the size of the protest and divide the participants.

A total of 400 trucks, vans, and tractors converged on London from several parts of the country, according to the *Daily Telegraph*. The government dispatched police to force most of these vehicles to park on a major road to the west of the city, causing major traffic disruption. Drivers had to leave their vehicles and walk to the rally. Other protesters were threatened with having their vehicles seized if they left them, according to rally organizers. A separate protest took place in Scotland where 82 vehicles followed a five-mile route through the center of Edinburgh, the Scottish capital.

The mood of the protesters in London was spirited and determined. "Meet a poor farmer," Frank Di Claudio told *Militant* reporters, extending his hand. Di Claudio, of Italian descent and a tenant dairy farmer in Wiltshire, joined the protest with other members of Farmers For Action. He was anxious to dispel the myth that all farmers were wealthy.

"My income last year was minus £3,000," he said. Before hurrying away to meet a police deadline to move their tractors, Di Claudio and the other Wiltshire farmers explained why they had decided to get organized. "No one speaks for us," one said, noting that the National Farmers Union, the



Lead truck of five-vehicle convoy in November 14 protest against high fuel prices. Convoy was part of rally in London of 1,500 farmers, truckers, and supporters from England and Wales. A similar demonstration took place in Scotland.

main farmers' organization, is "part of the establishment." "We need more direct action. We need to be more militant like the French farmers," Di Claudio added.

The protest convoys and Hyde Park rally grew out of militant actions by exploited working farmers and truckers in September outside oil depots and refineries. The actions tied up fuel supplies for several days nearly shutting the country down and causing a major political crisis.

The blockades were widely supported by working people, including oil tanker drivers who refused to move fuel through picket lines. Protesters suspended their action, setting a 60-day deadline--until November 14--for the government to meet their demands. At the rally, PFL leader Martin Francis said, "Next year, when the time is right, I will be outside the oil depots again."

Les Parrat, a trucker from near Buxton, in Derbyshire, employs one driver and operates two trucks. He traveled here by bus with other farmers and truckers from his area where a meeting of 450 people was organized the previous week. "It never stops!" he said. "I pay £8,000 a year in vehicle tax, fuel prices are rising, and the list goes on."

Parrat's wife does all the paperwork without pay, including ensuring that all the various taxes are paid. The trucker also pointed to how the assault on his living standard was part of a broader social crisis. "My kids sit at the same desks in the village school, as I did 40 years ago," he said, "they are using the same books."

### UK, U.S. farmers face same conditions

Randy Jasper, a dairy farmer from Wisconsin, traveled from the United States to join the rally and was invited to speak after meeting a number of farmers and others at the action. "In the United States they tell us UK and European farmers are doing well," Jasper said. "In the UK they tell you U.S. farmers are doing well. I am here to tell you that's not true. We are losing six dairy farmers a day in Wisconsin. We all face the same conditions. I and other small farmers in the United States stand with you in your fight."

Farmers at the rally were eager to meet Jasper and exchanged experiences about the struggles and conditions of farmers in the United States and the United Kingdom. Jasper told them of his discussions with farmers in revolutionary Cuba, where he traveled as part of a delegation of farmers from the United States earlier this year. "Unlike here and in the United States," he said, "farmers in Cuba are respected."

Leading up to the convoys and rally, the Labour government of Prime Minister Anthony Blair sought to divide the fuel protesters, undercut support for them among workers, and boost his party's prospects in a general election expected in early 2001. Gordon Brown, Chancellor of the Exchequer, announced some concessions November 8 in the form of modest fuel and vehicle tax cuts, along with increases in the state pension and other spending measures. The tax cuts, larger than expected but falling well short of addressing the needs of working farmers and truckers, were dismissed by rally participants.

"All he's given me is enough to buy 12 gallons of diesel a week," said Pat Jagger, an owner-operator truck driver from Shropshire. "I use 1,000 gallons a month. He's trying to buy us off."

David Handley, the outgoing chair of the People's Fuel Lobby and a leader of Farmers For Action, repeated his call at the rally for "a 15 pence across-the-board cut in fuel taxes for everybody."

While Brown's measures were small concessions, he was fiercely criticized in the big-business press, reflecting concern among the ruling rich that other working people may follow the militant example of the farmers and truck drivers to press their demands. "There is a risk that it has left the

impression that protest can divert official policy," said *The Times*.

As well as this small carrot, the Labour government used what they described as "robust" police tactics against the protesters, denying both the truck drivers and farmers their basic democratic right of freedom of movement.

Convoy participants were handed a three-page letter from the Northumbria police at the beginning of the protest detailing 12 offenses for which they would face instant arrest. "Exclusion zones" were declared around Leeds, London, Manchester, and York where demonstrators were barred from entering with their vehicles, although the order imposed on London was not fully enforced.

### 'Heavy handed' cops

Police tactics included driving alongside trucks and recording the drivers on video cameras, noting registration numbers, and splitting up the convoy in an obvious effort to disrupt it. Protest leader John Coxon said the police "have been very, very, heavy handed." In addition, Metropolitan Police Commissioner John Stevens raised the scare that "terrorists" might infiltrate the protest convoy on its way into London.

Prior to the latest protests, Prime Minister Blair said he would not give in to the demands of the farmers and truck drivers, claiming that doing so would threaten the living standards of other working people through increased interest rates as well as undermining government spending plans on health and education.

The Blair government has not sought to increase taxes on oil companies, which have just reported large increases in profits. In the third quarter of the year British Petroleum's profits rose by 90 percent to £2.56 billion and Shell's rose 80 percent. Shell is currently raking in £25 million per day in profit, according to *The Times*.

Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth mounted reactionary counterprotests along the convoy route and at the November 14 rally. A leaflet distributed at the rally by Greenpeace activists said the price of oil "must remain high to limit its use and reduce the damage we do to our environment." Meanwhile, in a provocative act, members of Friends of the Earth, holding umbrellas, stood in the road by the front of the lead truck of the small protest convoy as it neared the rally site.

Many farmers at the rally were keen to explain how high fuel prices are part of the broader crisis in agriculture, especially the declining prices they receive for their products from capitalist agribusiness. Linda Mycock, who raises sheep in Derbyshire, said in an interview that 27 years ago she sold lambs "for £30 each. This year I sold them for £4.50 less."

## Washington opposes return of islanders to Diego Garcia after British court ruling

BY GREG McCARTAN

The island of Diego Garcia is most widely known as a U.S. naval and air base, strategically located in the Indian Ocean. Washington's most recent use of these facilities has been to launch B-52 air strikes against Iraq.

A British High Court last week ruled that the government of the United Kingdom, which controls the island, acted unlawfully in expelling thousands of local residents in the 1960s to make way for the U.S. military base.

London gave Washington a 50-year lease to the 52-island Chagos Archipelago, then a part of British-owned Mauritius, for construction of a military base. The court also overturned a 1971 order banning the islanders from returning.

Some 3,000 families were evicted from their homes and sent 1,200 miles away to Mauritius and "simply dumped at dockside,"

said a lawyer for the islanders. The inhabitants of Diego Garcia, descendants of African slaves and Indian plantation workers, were fishermen, farmers, and coconut plantation workers.

Former resident Rita Bancoult told the media, "The British thought that because we were black, the descendants of slaves, they could do what they wanted. We were promised homes, cattle, and money to help us begin a new life on Mauritius. But it never materialized.... The British were the hangman of our people."

Washington has strongly objected to the return of the islanders and the British government quickly issued new ordinances allowing return to any of the 52 Chagos islands, except for Diego Garcia, now the only inhabited island. A Foreign Office official told the *Financial Times* that London "will not be going all out to create a public-sector funded community on these islands."

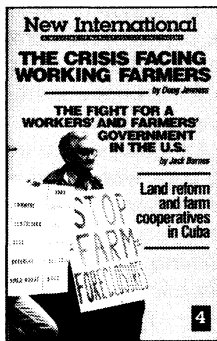
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